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# GOODOLDBOAT

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## Helmophobia

**BY KAREN LARSON** 

### Hand and reef, I'm in . . . but must I also steer?

A fter more than 20 years of sailing, I have finally figured out that I lack the knack for steering. Apparently I just don't have the right combination of skills. I'll do deck work. I'll be right there with lines and fenders when docking. I'll get the sails up and down. I'll climb up on the cabintop to reef the main. When tacking, jibing, or launching the spinnaker, count on me. Time to anchor? I'm there! I can navigate from place to place. I can handle provisioning for a week or two or three. I'll make the cabin cozy. I'm generally cheerful and seldom seasick. But I'm reluctant to take the helm.

I'm just not that good at it. Perhaps I'm not motivated to improve that skill as long as there's someone else aboard who is better. Or maybe I lack the attention span for long periods of time spent at the helm. With a whole lake to cross and after just five or 10 minutes behind the wheel, I'm looking for any excuse to escape that responsibility. It's not that I won't stand my watch. I'm happy to stand a watch day or night... with the assistance of the Autohelm. Unfortunately, that noisy little device spoils the intense quiet of our sailing time. And it uses a lot of battery power. Or the sea state confounds it. When the Autohelm won't work, I do my best for as long as I can and then find a way to give command of the ship back to Jerry. He's happy there. I'm happy to be nearby and doing those other tasks.

Please don't even *mention* backing the boat. Honest, I've tried! Jerry is positive that backing *Mystic* is as easy as driving a car in reverse. She has none of those bad habits that drive other skippers wild when arriving at or leaving the dock. So he says. Maneuvering in close quarters takes all the relaxation out of the sailing experience for me. Please don't make me do it. As soon as I get into a — shall we just call it a "situation"? — I beg the skipper to take over and save our boat from disgrace (and perhaps an expensive insurance claim).

This coming season our second boat — the project boat with the tiller — will be launched. I have had very little experience with a tiller on any boat. I understand the concept well enough, but I fear the combination of my limited skill at the helm and the increased sensitivity of the tiller. Or it could go the other way for me. Who knows? Maybe I'll excel at tiller steering. Perhaps that's exactly what I've needed all along. *Could be!* Or perhaps in a year or two you'll read a further confession in these pages regarding the realities of tiller steering for those of limited attention spans.

I have no doubt that I can bring us home if necessary. That scenario doesn't trouble me as it does some sailing wives. And I do admit to being a sailing wife. That's not a disgraceful title. On the contrary! Many sailors would give a great deal to have a sailing wife! We are not co-equals on our boat. Jerry started sailing long before I did and we've both been learning together for the couple of decades since. For the kind of cruising we do, he has more practice, more experience, and more confidence than I do. We both like our wilderness cruising and are comfortable in our roles aboard. Neither one of us has rounded Cape Horn, nor has any ambition to do so. For the sort of cruising we like to do, however, we make a good team.

I am confident that I can get our boat home (and docked!) safely. I may not get us home with the same grace that would be shown by my favorite captain. I certainly won't get there as fast. Before we started cruising, Jerry spent years racing in a one-design fleet three days a week. As a result, he watches telltales and tweaks sails and follows the wind in all the ways a proper helmsman should. So he squeezes every 10th of a knot out of her and steers in a straight line too.

Once on the boat, my attention is diverted by the lovely play of light on the water, the nearby wildlife, the shoreline attractions, and yes, the navigation. I am already out there on the water where I want to be. What's the hurry now?  $\square$ 

Is it that watching telltales gives her a stiff neck or that bundling up to steer the cold Lake Superior breezes — over a life jacket to boot — makes her feel like the Michelin Man? Whatever the reason, Karen doesn't take well to the helm.

# Ratio revelation, cults, and forgive

#### **Exponents exposed on the Web**

I read Rob Mazza's article "Ratio Rationale" in the November 2013 issue with great interest, and decided to crunch the figures for my own boat.

As I was struggling with (Beam)<sup>1.333</sup> my daughter called. I mentioned that I couldn't remember how to do fractional exponents and she said, "You don't have to. There's a website that does that for you. What's your beam?"

"10.75 feet," I said.

"Just go to the website, www.wolframalpha.com, and enter 10.75^1.333 and you'll have your answer immediately," she said. "The trick is to enter the arrow that's pointing upward over the #6 key on your keyboard (^) to indicate the next number is an exponent."

I went to the website and in seconds I had my answer. (The website was amazingly easy to use.)

Now, I may well be the last one on the planet who didn't know about this website. My daughter assures me that all the kids in school do. But just in case you haven't run across this, I'm passing it on.

-Don Launer, Forked River, N.J.

#### **Cult member?**

Ottawa might be frozen but I am having a great time sorting through all the spare parts for my "new" 1979 Alberg 29, splicing new thimbles onto old anchor rodes, and planning for an April launch.

The January 2014 issue of *Good Old Boat* is helping me get through the near-record snowfall that we have received this December — close to 50 percent of an average winter's snowfall in one month. On the bright side, spring water levels will be good and high.

I also wanted to say thank you for the new ball cap and T-shirt I ordered. I'm not much for wearing clothing with corporate logos but feel that the Good Old Boat insignia represents membership in an exclusive club (cult?) of good old boaters of which I am proud to be a member.

-Colin Mombourquette, Orleans, Ontario

#### A tip for painting perfection

I really enjoyed Anne McMillen-Jackson's two-part article on painting their Bruce Roberts 45. My wife and I painted our Capri 25 (the review boat in the January/February 2013 issue) two years ago using many of the same techniques and the results still look great.

One additional tip that worked really well for us came from Don Casey's book, *This Old Boat*, which is to do some test painting on a piece of propped-up window glass before you start applying paint to the hull. It's a great surface for determining the right amount of thinner to get that perfect viscosity where the brush strokes disappear yet you get no sags. In our case, we got scrap glass pieces for nothing at a local framing shop.

Finally, keep up the great work with the magazine. I loved Mike Nelson's line in his article, "Trailer-sailer Choices" (January 2014), where he said to choose the boat by how you will use it *most often*. It's refreshing to read a sailing magazine that doesn't seem to be constantly pushing me to buy the latest multi-million-dollar megayacht!

-Rob Geisler, Coventry, Vt.

#### Capitan 26

Thanks for article on Chris Craft's Capitan 26 (November 2013). We thought you might like to see a picture of ours moored in Converse Bay, Lake Champlain, Vermont (below). –Ken & Tricia Jarecki, Pittsfield, Vt.



#### **Replacing lifelines**

I'm planning to replace the lifelines on our 26-foot boat in the spring, so I read Gary Pardun's article in the January 2014 issue with interest. Last spring, I learned about a tool I'll use again when working on the lifelines.

With my 70th birthday approaching, I decided to stop setting up the un-stayed mast of my small trailered catboat by balancing it while standing on the foredeck in the launch-site parking lot. I'd started to worry I might accidentally learn more than I wanted to about the Scottish caber-toss athletic event. I cut the catboat mast and built a tabernacle on the lower part. I then had to add shrouds to the rig. I decided to use <sup>3</sup>/<sub>16</sub>-inch cable. I've cut cable before using a couple of methods with varying success. Gary's method worked the best for me.

However, I noticed that the Duckworks website (www. duckworksbbs.com) had a simple cable cutter. I bought one figuring that at worst I'd be out \$20. The manufacturer is Swage-it Tools Inc. (www.swage-ittools.com). I've seen them

## me, Father

in catalogs before but never bought or tried one. I have arthritic hands, and when I ordered the cutter I wondered how much effort I'd need to use. I was amazed at how little force it took. It was like a knife through butter. Really! I believe it's because it shears rather than cuts, but it's not a subject I know much about. I do know that it cut cleanly and efficiently without squashing or fraying the end of the cable. Duckworks also has copper crimping sleeves and swaging tools.

-Jim Allaire, St. Cloud, Minn.

#### Forgive me, Father ...

In assisting one of our readers with our new digital version of the magazine, our tech staff made the suggestion to first download the January issue to his computer and then sync the PDF to his iPad. His response was:

My sins are many ... I got rid of my computer because it accused me of being an idiot, which I readily admit to since I'm not the sharpest pen in the pocket protector. But I still dislike the accusation, so I threw the damned thing overboard. It's in three fathoms of water under the mud. Mea culpa just a bit, but it gave me eminent pleasure to get rid of it. The iPad is next, if it does not behave! I learned to read and write (cursive, no less) and to add and subtract in my schooldays, so to h\*\*\* with the computer. I did all my income taxes this year with pencil on paper. They are all done ... and it was painless, quick, and easy. Two days and I'm through for the year. Which is also to say that I'm done with the computer for good. So I won't be helping you with trying out your recipe for fixing that iPad problem!

-Father Richard Hicks, Alameda, Calif.

This red nun at the mouth of Quartermaster Harbor in the South Salish Sea is Terry Donnelly's favorite navigational aid. It's special because, as you exit the harbor, Mount Rainier comes into view and (weather permitting) is always a spectacular sight.

#### **Hoyt Freedoms**

I appreciated Gregg Nestor's article about Bob Allenick's Freedom 38 (January 2014). As another Freedom owner at Edgewater Yacht Club where Bob is, I can say his boat is kept up and used as well and as often as most of us would like to do! However, Greg did err in one respect. He said Freedom Yachts built boats from 25 feet on up; it actually built smaller boats. Our first Freedom, which we owned for 14 years, was the Hoyt-designed Freedom 21, a wonderful little "cat sloop" with the gun-mount spinnaker. I believe more than 200 of these were built. Freedom also built the 20-foot Freedom Independence, which was designed for handicapped sailors. We now have a Mull-designed Freedom 28.

-Tom and JoAnn Alexander, Akron, Ohio

#### continued on page 68



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beautifully maintained classic sailboat is sure to attract attention, even among non-sailors. The graceful hull lines and the fine details, in this case of a Cheoy Lee Clipper 36, vintage 1977, are there for all to admire. It's not a stretch to say this boat exemplifies what's meant by "shipshape and Bristol fashion."

On the transom board, the name *Rapport* glows in traditional gold leaf against a background of high-gloss varnish. Is it *Rapport*, as in harmony and accord, or because *rapporter* suggests "to bring back"? She could fit either description as she did indeed need a rescue, and her owners have accomplished an extraordinary renovation.

Ron Koris and Gwyn Nethaway proved to be the right team to take on this needs-work boat. They are sailors first and foremost, and that's necessary for incentive. "There's nothing quite like a sailboat moving through the water smoothly and quietly with only the wind for power," says Gwyn. "You just can't duplicate that feeling in any other way. And on a brisk day, well then, you still can't duplicate it. It's just a kick!" Indeed, it is.

Many sailors come to the joy of sailing by simply growing into it — if it was summertime, it was family sailing time. For Ron, things were a bit delayed. Though his dad had talked long and often about someday doing some long-distance sailing, he never actually made the time for it. Ron remembered the dream and eventually latched onto it. "I started sailing in college," he says, "and it didn't take long for me to get hooked." One college professor was especially helpful. He had a motto: "Anything less than a hurricane, we sail!" For the students, that meant good training and great sailing.

Gwyn's childhood home was in northern Michigan, but she didn't sail there. She stayed in the Midwest through the years of college and veterinary school and, soon after graduation, relocated to Virginia. As an equine veterinarian, she wanted her own practice in a place that's known for its horses. It was actually business that brought Ron and Gwyn together. Ron's company handled pharmaceuticals and he was an independent distributor to the medical community. Horses, of course, need pharmaceuticals too.

All agree this boat has character

#### Sailing as a couple

Sailing hadn't been part of Gwyn's original plan, but since she didn't like the idea of Ron sailing alone every weekend, she was determined to sail too. Her introduction to the boat will be familiar to many: no pre-sail warning, no mention of tilting, or heeling, or any other angle word. Gwyn was seated on the low side, enjoying a lovely sail and chatting about the absence of mechanical sounds when she realized how close she was, face to wave. She sat up very quickly and as upright as her petite frame would allow. Not one to be easily frightened, she recovered and truly did not look back. By the time Ron and Gwyn were married, their sailing style centered on cruising the southern Chesapeake in a 27-foot Catalina named *Music*.

**£** 36

3120

Gwyn still looks forward to those days when the only sounds are those of wind and water: "What a great way to travel!" she says. "But... I did not fall in love with kedging into or out of a slip!" As bad luck would have it, the marina had assigned *Music* to a slip that was

BY ZORA AIKEN

# a Cheoy Lee Clipper 36



One of many handsome design details, *Rapport*'s bowsprit, at left, commands attention (particularly when docking bow-in). The gold-leaf lettering on *Rapport*'s elegant transom board, at right, was done by Deltaville artist Steve Smith, aka Kaptain Krunch.

not deep enough for her at low tide. Leaving the slip sometimes required Gwyn to call on her horsemanship skills. She would lasso the nearest piling, winch the boat as far forward as possible, then move on to the next piling. The return sometime later might require a similar effort.

From the city of Chesapeake, Ron's general business territory at the time, it was a short ride to a number of bay tributaries and marinas. *Music* was docked at Yankee Point Marina on Myer Creek near the Rappahannock River bridge. The marina annually hosted the Hospice Turkey Shoot Regatta for classic boats. Ron and Gwyn volunteered at this well-known fundraiser for years, fixing breakfast for upward of 500 people.

While Gwyn worked on sailing skills, Ron learned a special kind of horseback riding known as field competitions, in which horse and rider are put through a series of tests around a marked course. Because these competitions are often strenuous, a veterinarian is posted at various points along the way. As each horse arrives at a checkpoint, it is examined head to hoof to make sure it can continue the run. Gwyn rode in many competitions, too, and often served as judge and veterinarian.

Sailing, though, filled the greater part of their free time. One day, somebody said something about a larger boat.

#### **Bigger-boat syndrome**

As most cruising sailors know, once raised, the notion of a bigger boat does not easily disappear. Once voiced, it must be dealt with. So one Sunday, Ron, Gwyn, and a yacht broker went to see a little pea-green boat. Actually, it was a 30-foot white something or other they were to look at — lovely, but Gwyn thought it small. Ron recalls Gwyn staring past the 30-footer, her attention focused on a boat at the next dock. It needed work; she could see



Ron and Gwyn in the cockpit with a favorite upgrade — the comprehensive suite of electronic navigation instruments.

that. The varnish was gone. The instruments were probably old and useless. Pea-green mildew covered everything.

"Why wouldn't I want this boat?" Gwyn thought. "This boat has character!"

Pointing to it, she asked the broker, "What's that?"

"Oh no," thought Ron. "Please don't look at that one!"

"Well..." said the broker. "That one's not in very good shape; you probably don't want that. Now *this* boat has ..."

"I want to look at *that* boat," said Gwyn, a bit louder than before. Ron hemmed, the broker hawed, and Gwyn prevailed. Once she opened the

> companionway hatch and saw all the beautiful interior woodwork, there was no looking elsewhere. On the plus side, the hull was fiberglass. Ron was already juggling dollars. "If we can buy it at a low enough price, we'll have the money to pay for fixing it. I'll buy it and fix it." He added one proviso: "I never want to hear one word of complaint about the dollars that will be poured into the hole that is that boat!"

Apparently, Gwyn agreed. The deal was done — the couple became the proud owners of a Cheoy Lee Clipper 36 designed by Bill Luders, who also drew the Naval Academy's 44-foot yawls, among other recognized classics.



Originally a pilot berth, a large shelf area on the starboard side now holds the liveaboard home comforts of a microwave and an icemaker, at left. Just under the shelf, Ron built a narrow locker where they store paper charts flat. Ron also made the spice rack, at right. The Force 10 propane heater, below, is the right size to warm the cabin on chilly evenings at anchor.

Despite his initial concerns, Ron was pleased with this unexpected purchase. Curiously, the boat was not meant to fit an imminent cruising plan nor to satisfy an immediate desire to live aboard. But circumstances were falling into place to enable one or both to occur within a few years.

#### The liveaboard option

The economic slowdown of the early 1990s that forced lifestyle changes for many people affected the local horse economy. Gwyn opted to sell the practice and retire. This prompted a move from the city of Chesapeake to the area around the Rappahannock River. Ron was still thinking "house" when Gwyn suggested they try living on the boat instead. "I guess the idea kind of grew on me over time," she says, while making little motions with her hands. "It just makes sense. I can take care of it; I can manage this much space. If I don't use something, I'll just get rid of it."

With living aboard in their future, they looked at houses, but not to buy. Instead, they rented a place where they could live and also work on boat projects because, before they could move aboard their "new" boat, they would have to fix her up.

#### A progression of priorities

A practical worker, Ron started a list of projects. By the middle of page two (on legal-size paper yet) he realized he should approach the list from a different angle.

Ron decided to focus first on what needed to be done so they could sail



the boat the next summer. That list filled half of a standard letter-size page ... doable. Working through the winter should enable them to sail in the spring and summer. This was a much better incentive than looking toward the end of a four-year plan. Work some, sail some, work some, sail more, and so on until the work is done.

First on the list was a most ambitious project to remove all the interior wood pieces and strip, sand, and revarnish them. Not an easy task in any circumstances, it would have been nearly impossible to do while living aboard. As each piece came out, Gwyn coded it for later reassembly into the master puzzle. The interior wood was then finished with traditional Schooner varnish.

"I got a new propane cookstove for our first after-boat-purchase Christmas," boasts Gwyn, though of course it was really a together gift. As they are both avid cooks, they normally take weekly turns at *Rapport*'s galley or grill, turning out unique combinations of foods and flavorings.

"And I got an anchor windlass too," says Gwyn. "That might have been for a birthday."

The electric panel is new. "The original was nearly impossible to see," Ron says. He made the new panel, but asked the yard to do the wiring. They also had new stainless-steel ports fitted and Ron replaced all the throughhull fittings with new ones made of composite material. They also have a new Force 10 propane heater.

"Don't forget the new interior cushions," says Gwyn, "and the new headliner." In addition, all the water lines on the boat have been replaced. The head has a new toilet, a new sink, and a Lectra/San system.

"The boat has a deck-stepped mast," says Ron. "At some point, I noticed that the base under the mast was looking a little concave. At first, we couldn't lift the floorboards to check this, but when we did, we saw that the compression post was just sitting on a pan in the shower, and it had finally bowed the pan. I had to cut a hole in the pan and use a jack to raise the post up. I cut a 4-inch piece of PVC pipe and filled it with epoxy. The compression post now sits on top of that base."

They sandblasted the keel, which is iron covered with fiberglass. The blasting took off the fiberglass along with the corrosion, so Ron re-glassed it, put on a barrier coat, and repainted it. While working on that project,



Gwyn works in the compact galley with Joshua, at left, who joined the crew as a rescue kitten soon after Ron and Gwyn bought *Rapport*. Refrigeration is on the starboard side. Ron built the new Bass electrical panel, at right, to replace the original panel, which was barely accessible and difficult to read. The side-by-side radios are an ICOM-M802 SSB (which receives GRIB weather data) and a West Marine VHF radio.

Ron found and fixed a hole in a fuel tank. "I was glad I found that early on," he says. Many listed projects sprouted spin-off work in that way.

"We were really lucky with the masts," Ron says. "They're wooden, and leaving them on the boat for years of outside storage could have spelled disaster. But the previous owner had removed them and stored them indoors. I had to replace only one spreader even that was \$200 of Sitka spruce. Oops . . . money talk!"

The main halyard was an immediate problem too. It was wire — standard when the boat was new, but not desirable today. And Gwyn had to stand on the cowl vents to reach the winch. The new halyard runs back to the cockpit. All the standing and running rigging has been replaced.

"And," says Gwyn, "we got new sails." "This is the first ketch I've sailed," Ron explains. "I asked Jerry Latell of Ullman Sails in Deltaville for his recommendations. As a result, we have a fully battened main and a 110 jib. It has worked out perfectly. It's so easy to balance the boat."

#### **Cosmetic touches**

Hull painting finally reached "to-do" status in 1999, three years after they bought the boat. "When planning for supplies," Ron says, "I realized what a job it is to paint this boat. With a Cheoy Lee, you don't just buy one big can of white Awlgrip. That works for most of the hull, but then there's the colored stripe and boot top." *Rapport*'s are green. And applying the gold leaf for the name and scroll design requires a special skill as well as a special coating. Then there are the cabin sides, finished with Honey Teak from Signature Paints in Florida and, finally, bottom paint.

Re-chroming can create problems during a refit, so Gwyn was very careful to record all the pieces she sent away. They came back one item short, but not because something was lost. Gwyn had accidentally sent a stainless-steel item. The chroming company kindly forwarded the odd piece to the stainless-steel polishers and a delayed communication kept it out of Gwyn's return package. Good news and good service — and no extra charge!

In the cockpit, they moved the engine display from the bottom of the cockpit to the back of the cabin bulkhead and moved the sailing instruments from there to a new pedestal guard. They also installed a Garmin chart plotter, HD Radar, and AIS together with a Raymarine Smart Pilot for wind, depth, and speed.

"All the things we've added have been good for their purpose," Gwyn said when asked about a favorite upgrade. "But the Bimini enclosure was a really great idea. In winter, we can turn heat on below and in a short time the heat rising from the interior combines with the sun streaming into the enclosure to make the space really comfortable. We can enjoy so much more light and outdoor time."

As for *Rapport*'s engine, today a Perkins 4-108 hums happily in place, installed while Gwyn and Ron enjoyed a delightful winter vacation in Charleston, South Carolina. That, however, is another story.

#### What's next for Rapport?

"More cruising," says Ron. "First the usual places — the Intracoastal, Bahamas, Caribbean — then maybe the European canals and Greece."

"We both enjoy the travel aspects of cruising as much as the actual sailing time," says Gwyn. "We like to meander at sailboat speed, exploring the rivers and creeks and waterside towns. The ICW is not a ditch to us ... it's our route to neat people and places."  $\varDelta$ 

Zora Aiken and her husband, David, are the authors of several books about boating and camping and recently finished their seventh children's book illustrated by David. Their movable studio, office, and home is Atelier, a good old, now antique, 1963 35-foot Chris-Craft sloop.



The builder's plate is a cherished fitting.

# The Cheoy Lee Clipper 36...

... and two more classic clippers

BY ROB MAZZA

The most obvious design feature of the Bill Luders Cheoy Lee Clipper 36 is the pronounced clipper bow, which is synonymous with the name of the boat. Therefore, for this design comparison I looked for similar-sized boats with the same design feature, and chose the Cabo Rico 34 and the Gozzard 31. When done well, as on the L. Francis Herreshoff-designed *Ticonderoga*, the clipper bow is a thing of beauty.

In my long career of designing fiberglass production boats for a number of builders I have never worked on a boat with a clipper bow. My experience with the genre is purely observational. From that perspective, my impression is that the clipper bow can be executed in two ways. In one, the reverse curvature in the profile is achieved with the added stem piece, and the stem itself does not have the inflection. This is a common approach in wooden boats and is copied in some fiberglass models. The Gozzard 31 is an example of this style, which partially explains why its length on deck (LOD) appears shorter than on the other two boats. The other way is to build the reverse curvature in the stem and the hull together, almost as if by pinching the tip of the stemhead between thumb and forefinger and stretching the whole upper section of the bow forward. The Clipper 36 and the Cabo Rico 34 are examples of this approach.

#### A matter of length

Comparing these boats was an interesting exercise on several fronts. One discovery I made was that length over all (LOA) or even LOD are poor measures of comparative size for boats with clipper bows. I began by looking at 37- and 38-foot boats, but soon realized that these boats were much too



	Clipper 36 Cabo Rico 34		Gozzard 31	
LOA	40' 6"	37' 0"	36' 2"	
LOD	35' 8"	34' 0"	31' 0"	
LWL	25' 0"	26' 8"	26' 0"	
Beam	10' 9"	11' 0"	11' 0"	
Draft	5'4"	4' 10"	4' 5"	
Displacement	16,250 lb	17,400 lb	12,000 lb	
Ballast	5,375 lb	5,800 lb	4,800 lb	
LOA/LWL	1.43	1.27	1.19	
Beam/LWL	0.43	0.41	0.42	
Disp./LWL	464	409	305	
Bal./Disp.	.33	.33	.40	
Sail Area (100%)	726	745	614	
SA/Disp.	18.1	17.7	18.7	
Capsize Number	1.70	1.70	1.93	
Comfort Ratio	37	38	27	
Years built	1969-1988	1988-present	1992-present	
Designer	Bill Luders	William Crealock	Ted Gozzard	
Builder	Cheoy Lee Shipyards Ltd.	Cabo Rico Yachts	North Castle Marine	

large to compare with the Clipper 36. In order to do a realistic comparison, I had to drop to a 34- and a 31-footer. Even then, these "smaller" boats are longer than the Clipper 36 on the load waterline (LWL), which is a better measure of interior volume.

The other interesting comparison in these three boats is the obvious evolution of underwater shapes from the Bill Luders Clipper 36 of the late 1960s to the Bill Crealock and Ted Gozzard cruising designs of the '80s and '90s. Specifically, the later designs benefit from the development of a distinct foil-type keel that becomes increasingly distinguishable from the canoe body of the hull but remains connected to the rudder, in the case of the Gozzard by means of a skeg. Obviously, this better-defined keel has a pronounced influence on upwind performance, as well as reducing the wetted surface for improved downwind performance.

#### **Performance factors**

Although sailing performance is not the primary consideration for these boats, a comparison is still of interest. I'll begin by noting that both the Cabo Rico and the Gozzard have longer load waterlines than the Clipper, with the Cabo Rico having the longest of all. Length means greater ultimate speed, especially on a reach. The shorter waterline of the Clipper, combined with a moderately high displacement, results in a relatively high displacement/length ratio (D/L) of 464. Compare that to 409 for the Cabo Rico and a relatively low 305 for the Gozzard — due to her lower 12,000pound displacement on a relatively long waterline length. The ketch rig will further compromise the Clipper's upwind performance.

We often look at draft as an indication of upwind potential. The Clipper has the greatest, at more than 5 feet, while the Cabo Rico draws more than the Gozzard. However, we also need to look at keel efficiency and wetted surface. Here, the Gozzard clearly has an advantage.

Upwind stability is a function of displacement and beam, with the Cabo Rico clearly having the best combination. However, despite her shallower draft, the Gozzard, with her lighter displacement and higher sail area/ displacement ratio (SA/D), combined with lower wetted surface and a more efficient underbody, will have the edge in light to moderate breezes - before she has to reef. Upwind in a blow, certainly on the verge of reefing, the Cabo Rico will perform well, considering her longer waterline, greater displacement and ballast, and lower SA/D. But in light air, the Gozzard will be the boat to beat.

Reaching and running, the same conditions apply. The longer waterline of the Cabo Rico and her greater stability work to her advantage in heavier air, while the Gozzard's lighter displacement and lower wetted surface will favor her in light and moderate air.

#### **Comfort and safety**

The capsize numbers are all below 2, but the higher displacements of the Cabo Rico and the Clipper give them a lower number than the Gozzard. All the comfort ratios are also well within cruising boat ranges, with the lighter displacement of the Gozzard giving her the lowest of the three.

There is no question that the Clipper 36 is an exceptionally goodlooking boat from the board of one of the finest designers. For that reason alone she warrants consideration by anyone interested in boats with the classic appearance of the clipper bow. However, it's also difficult to ignore the modern underbody and lighter displacement, combined with traditional design aesthetics, of the Gozzard 31.

Rob Mazza is a Good Old Boat contributing editor. A lifelong sailor, he writes about good old boats from the vantage point of having been involved in the design of a good many of them.



# Sacrificial Anodes 101

Nobility among metals has its benefits

**BY DON LAUNER** 

hen two dissimilar metals are immersed in an electrolyte, they form a battery. If they are connected electrically, an electric current will flow between them. (An electrolyte is any substance that is electrically conductive due to the presence of free ions. Electrolytic solutions are normally created when a salt dissolves in a solvent such as water.) In the process of creating an electric current, the "less noble" of the immersed metals supplies electrons to the electrolyte. The resulting positive metal ions bond with salt ions in the electrolyte and the metal corrodes. This galvanic corrosion is an immensely important issue for sailors since our boats spend their time floating in an electrolyte.

#### The galvanic series

The galvanic series places metals, alloys, and semi-metals in order of their comparative nobility — noble metals resist corrosion and oxidation in an electrolyte better than less noble metals.

The galvanic series table shown here is for common metals used aboard boats in a saltwater environment. Noble metals are at the bottom of the table and the least noble at the top. The nobility order can change slightly in different environments, such as when a boat is in brackish or fresh water.

Some metals are labeled active and some passive. A passive metal is one that is protected by an oxide film. An active metal does not have this protective film and is more susceptible to corrosion as its surface is constantly exposed.

#### **Sacrificial anodes**

On most boats, several dissimilar metals are joined together in the water, as when a bronze propeller is fitted to a stainless-steel shaft.



Whenever dissimilar metals are immersed in an electrolyte, a battery is created. If they become connected electrically, a current will flow between them and cause the less noble metal to deteriorate.

#### **Galvanic series**

Common marine metals from least noble (top) to most noble (bottom). Magnesium Zinc Aluminum Mild steel Stainless steel (active) Bronze Brass Copper Lead Stainless steel (passive) Monel

More Online ... for a more comprehensive galvanic series table, go to www.goodoldboat.com/reader\_services/ more\_online/galvanic series.php. Galvanic corrosion on these valuable and important underwater fittings can be prevented by attaching to them a metal that's higher in the galvanic series. The less noble metal, called a sacrificial anode, protects the more noble metals by corroding first.

A sacrificial anode must be in electrical contact with the metals it is to protect, so when a sacrificial anode is fitted, the mounting surfaces of the two metals must be clean and bright. The efficiency of a sacrificial anode depends on its surface area. For obvious reasons, an anode should never be painted.

A sacrificial anode must never be allowed to corrode away completely because, when it is gone, the next least noble metal will begin to corrode. Therefore, monitoring and replacing sacrificial anodes regularly are important steps in routine maintenance. The time between replacements varies from boat to boat but, as a rule of thumb, the sacrificial anode should be replaced when it is about 50 percent destroyed.

#### **Anode materials**

The metal used in anodes depends on the water in which the boat is used. Zinc and aluminum alloys work well in salt water. In brackish water — water with less salinity than seawater — zinc's efficiency decreases while aluminum alloys still work well. Magnesium sacrificial anodes should not be used in salt water but offer the best protection in fresh water.

This presents a dilemma for trailersailors who may be using their boats in both fresh and salt water. For them, aluminum-alloy anodes are the best choice.

#### **Shapes and duties**

Sacrificial anodes are cast in hundreds of shapes and sizes. Some companies will also make anodes to custom specifications.



Some boats have one or more anodes attached to the hull and wired to immersed metal fittings such as through-hulls.

For boats with inboard engines, the most common shapes are collar castings for the propeller shaft and streamlined teardrops or smooth wafers for metal rudders and other underwater metals. Propeller-shaft castings are made to match shaft diameters and come in two parts that bolt around the shaft. Two common types are streamlined collar anodes and limited-clearance collar anodes. A small spring-loaded button is often incorporated to ensure good electrical contact.

A huge variety of anodes exists for outboard motors, with different castings made for different manufacturers and engine models. The variety of metals in an outboard motor make it especially susceptible to galvanic corrosion and many outboards use more than one sacrificial anode, not only on the lower unit but also in the engine block. These should be monitored and changed when necessary. An outboard's manual will show where these anodes should be located.

An inboard engine might have sacrificial anodes in the block or heat exchanger. Look in the engine manual to find where they are located.

Wherever water is in contact with dissimilar metals there is the chance of galvanic corrosion. This also includes metal water tanks, hot-water tanks, and refrigerators and air-conditioners that use outside water to cool their condensers.  $\varDelta$ 

Don Launer, a Good Old Boat contributing editor, built his two-masted schooner, Delphinus, from a bare hull. He has held a USCG captain's license for 40 years and has written five books. His 101 articles through November 2011 are available for downloading as a collection from the Good Old Boat download website, www.audioseastories.com. Look under Archive eXtractions.



Anodes are available in many shapes and types to meet different needs on outboards.



othing looks quite as "yachtie" or traditional as a clipper bow with a long bowsprit pointing the way ahead. Some of the most classic designs through the history of sailing have sported clipper bows, from the little Friendship sloop to the magnificent designs of L. Francis Herreshoff and Bill Garden. Clipper bows don't have to have bowsprits (that configuration is known as a "bald" clipper), but the bowsprit does seem like the logical extension of the line of the bow arching compellingly forward. However, we must remember that yacht design - like architecture, art, music, fashion, and automotive design - does evolve over time and go through "periods," so trying to define what exactly constitutes "good" design in any of these various disciplines can be a moving target. Every time I visit the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, I'm bowled over by the large Jackson Pollocks, but even

he once asked himself, "Is this art?" Tastes change and, as we will see here, in the case of yachts they often change and evolve in line with shapes defined originally for racing. This evolution does not always move in a straight line but, in some cases, in what looks like a circle.

The clipper bow is named for the great clipper ships of the mid-19th century that bore it, but the concept was quickly adopted on pilot schooners and some large schooner yachts. The clipper bow soon became associated with "speed under sail."

In those various applications the advantages were the same. By stretching the bow forward, increased flare can be introduced in the forward sections, adding more buoyancy against burying the bow at speed in rough conditions, as well as keeping the foredeck drier and increasing the amount of working space for handling headsails. The extended bow also shortens the unsupported length of the bowsprit, and this has both structural and safety benefits. It's no coincidence that the long bowsprits in the offshore fishing fleets were known as "widow makers." There are also other practical advantages, such as being able to locate the hawsepipe farther forward so the anchor more easily clears the hull when it's being raised.

#### The influence of rules

Several past articles in *Good Old Boat* have discussed the important influence rating rules have had on the design of yachts, and this is as obvious in the profile shape of bows as any other aspect of design. What becomes popular and acceptable in racing yachts invariably influences the shape and perception of cruising boats.

Keeping that in mind, the "Golden Age" of the clipper bow on racing yachts on both sides of the Atlantic was immediately after the introduction of the Seawanhaka Rule in North



An 1890 gathering of the Lake Yacht Racing Association in Oswego, New York, at top, shows reverse stems, plumb bows, and clipper bows as exemplified by *Una* (1), modeled by Bob Fish in 1852; *Clara* (2), designed by Will Fife in 1884; and *Minerva* (3), designed by Will Fife in 1888.

# FUTURE BOAT BOW

## Fashion and formulas reshape the forefoot

**BY ROB MAZZA** 

America in 1883 and the similar Sail Area/Waterline Rule in England at the same time. Both of these new rules replaced older rules that penalized bow overhangs by measuring length as the "length between perpendiculars," that is, from the stern post to the farthest extent of the stem. Such a rule strongly encourages plumb stems — or even stems with reverse rake.

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With the new Seawanhaka Rule, the length used in the rating formula was the waterline length, not the overall length. Since the amount of bow overhang made no difference to the rating, British and American designers of the era, most notably Edward Burgess, A. Cary Smith, and William Gardner in the U.S., and George Lennox Watson and William Fife III in Great Britain, started to extend the bow beyond the LWL. They did this tentatively to begin with, since the dictums of the old rule were well ingrained in all of these designers, and the introduction of the clipper bow was their first attempt to inch the bow forward, free of the constraints of the old rule. The clipper bow was still popular on the larger schooners, so its adaptation to the smaller sloops followed an accepted precedent. This is seen most notably in the work of Edward Burgess in the U.S. and G.L. Watson in the U.K. The yachts in this period were some of the most strikingly beautiful boats ever built, although to us they are still obviously from another era.

Rule changes always bring new designers to the fore, since everyone has to start at the same point on the new playing field. Past experience with the old rule is of little value, and is often a detriment. It wasn't long before the new rule attracted new designers and new thinking.

In the U.S., Nathaniel Green Herreshoff introduced that new thinking when he designed *Gloriana*. With *Gloriana*'s bow, Herreshoff changed the look of yacht design overnight, making obsolete everything that had gone before.

#### The advent of the overhang

Ever since America in 1851, and certainly with the Wave-Line Theory (see "Scientific Yacht Design," January 2014), a long fine bow with a hollow entry was considered essential for speed. However, under the new Seawanhaka Rule, which measured waterline length only, a long bow increased the rated length of the boat but did not create a speed advantage to make up for it. Herreshoff demonstrated that trimming away a good chunk of the deadwood at the forward end of the load waterline created a fuller entry but substantially shortened the measured waterline length. This lowered the boat's rating and did not cause enough of a reduction in speed to negate this rating advantage. The approach taken in *Gloriana* was not so much to lengthen the forward



The Seawanhaka Rule, introduced in 1883, measured waterline length, so designers sought to gain sailing length by extending the hull forward. The clipper bow was one way. Then Nat Herreshoff's cutaway forefoot on *Gloriana* (4), eventually led to the spoon bow on his 1905 NY 30 (5).



In 1906, North American yacht clubs replaced the Seawanhaka Rule with the Universal Rule. Long bow overhangs, like that in the R-Class (6), persisted under that rule as well as in International Rule classes like the 6 Metre (7). The CCA Rule later encouraged slightly shorter bows (8).

overhang but more to shorten the waterline forward, which had the visual effect of lengthening the overhang. However, even *Gloriana* maintained a slight reverse curve as emblematic of the clipper bow.

This soon changed, even in *Wasp*, Herreshoff's successor to *Gloriana*. The American and British designers of the 1890s developed what was called at the time the "Viking" bow, which we now know as the "spoon" bow. Like many innovations, this change in bow shape was not greeted with universal approval, and at the time was considered ugly and even an abomination.

Later on, the Seawanhaka Rule did produce some of the most magnificent yachts ever built, and certainly the first of the "modern" yachts, with Watson's Britannia being a crowning example. However, only measuring one aspect of hull design (LWL) did produce problems as designers sought to exploit the rule. Boats designed to this rule soon approached scow-like proportions, with very short waterlines, very long overhangs, shoal draft, and wide beam carried well forward and aft. In extreme cases, and there were many, overall length approached twice the waterline length, with all sorts of structural challenges that long overhangs entail. The most notable example of this successful exploitation of the rule was the Herrick Duggan-designed *Dominion*, which for all intents and purposes was a catamaran. However, the magnificent 1903 Herreshoffdesigned 140-foot America's Cup defender, *Reliance*, was another remarkable exploitation of the obvious weaknesses of the rule.

#### **Reeling in design excesses**

The excesses that arose from the simplicity of the Seawanhaka Rule caused a response on both sides of the Atlantic that resulted in the adoption in 1906 of Herreshoff's Universal Rule in North America and, in Europe, the International Rule. Each of these had slightly different methods of defining length, with the Universal Rule taking a length measurement at the quarter-beam line, to penalize scows, and the International Rule introducing girth measurements (that would reappear much later in the IOR).

Both rules influenced the bow profile but produced very similar bow overhangs, with the spoon bow becoming even more established. Granted, large yachts built with clipper bows still did well on the racecourse, with L. Francis Herreshoff's *Tioga II* (better known today as *Ticonderoga*) and, sometime later, Philip Rhodes' *Thunderhead*  being excellent examples. Herreshoff was the more traditional in this respect, almost always employing bowsprits and trailboards, but *Thunderhead* had a "bald-headed" clipper bow with no bowsprit or trailboards. By contrast, Olin Stephens started his career designing International Rule 6 Metres, and that influence can certainly be seen in the bow of *Dorade*, his first offshore success.

In 1933, the Cruising Club of America established the CCA Rule. It was not a design rule, as such, but was based on an idealized hull form and applied penalties and benefits for departures from those base proportions. Since the CCA hull form drew from "healthy" examples produced by its predecessors, the bow shape did not change dramatically, although it became somewhat shorter than under the Universal and International rules. Since the measured length was calculated from LWL and a waterline above the LWL, the CCA stem profile had an interesting flatness at its lower end.

The IOR superseded the CCA rule in the early 1970s, and the influence of girth measurements, originally established in the International Rule and the Royal Offshore Racing Club (RORC) Rule, produced boats with raked but almost straight-line stems. It is amazing



In the 2000s, production builders of cruising sailboats, like Beneteau (12), and Hanse (13), extended waterlines to add usable interior volume. Wave-piercing bows are well established on multihulls (14). Is Neil Gilbert's concept design for the Kelowna Yacht Club, facing page, the future?



The CCA Rule gave way in 1970 to the IOR and, for the next nearly 20 years, bows on raceboats all looked very similar (9 and 10). As the IOR waned, one-design classes began to move toward plumb stems and cruising designs followed suit (11), but not for the same reasons.

how consistent this rake was across the IOR fleet. It was steeper than the spoon bows of the CCA Rule that preceded it.

#### Swinging back to plumb

After the IOR faded away, a number of offshore one-design classes prospered. A good few of these — the Mumms and the Farrs are examples — returned to almost plumb stems. This design trend has also been picked up by many builders of production cruiser/ racers and cruising boats. However, even when I was designing for Hunter back in the early 1990s, stems were becoming more vertical, irrespective of any rating rule. Reducing the rake of the stem leads to an increase in the waterline length, which in turn leads to more usable accommodation in the forward part of the boat.

Recently, of course, multihull racing, as seen in the latest America's Cup, has been well publicized, so we again see a change in bow fashion with a return to the "reverse" bow of *Una* of more than 150 years ago. This bow, too, may well become the norm and accepted by cruising purists as a thing of beauty and a joy forever.

It's well understood that beauty is in the eye of the beholder, and tastes change on a generational basis based on the types of boats people grew up with. Indeed, Gerry Douglas, chief designer and vice president of Catalina Yachts, maintains that a person's tastes in yacht design are established at the age of 14 by the boats then in vogue. So in 150 years of yacht design, from a "styling" point of view, have we really come that far? It really does look as though we have come full circle.  $\varDelta$ 

Rob Mazza's bio is on page 15

#### **References in Good Old Boat**

The topic of rating rules and boat shapes is a recurring one:

- "Rating Rules Shaped Our Boats" by Ted Brewer, May 2000
- "Best Forefoot Forward" by Robert Perry, November 2009
- "Beauty Is in the Numbers" by Robert Perry, January 2012



# Montgomery 17

## A handsome and seasoned trailer-sailer

#### **BY FERD JOHNS**

Lenny and Carla Corin sailed Sunfish and Sailfish on the East Coast when they were teenagers. Then, as Carla puts it, "life and children" intervened. Lenny spent 30 years with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, while Carla worked as a biologist and editor. Their boating activities were limited to family canoe and kayak trips, plus work-related diving from larger vessels. They spent several years working in Alaska before moving south in 2008 for an active retirement on Whidbey Island in Washington state.

Lenny had expressed interest in a 32-foot sailboat an acquaintance was selling when Carla asked, "But do we know how to sail?" Both wisely enrolled in a sailing course in the spring of 2013 and, as Carla puts it, "Luckily, that 32-footer was sold by the time we graduated." It seemed more prudent to restart their sailing adventures with a more modest craft, so after a brief flirtation with a new Montgomerydesigned Sage 17 (see November 2012), they purchased a used 1979 Montgomery 17 in nearby Anacortes.

Lenny is clearly enthused and anxious to begin taking weekend cruises. Carla is a bit more circumspect, but both express appreciation for having found such a sturdy, safe, and manageable craft for their first sailboat and are exploring the subtleties of small-boat sailing in an area of unpredictable winds and weather.

In addition to photographing and sailing the Corins' boat, we contacted a number of other M17 owners through the Montgomery Sailboat Owners Group. We asked about their experiences with the boat and have used their observations to flesh out our review.

#### **Background and history**

Lyle Hess designed the Montgomery 17 in 1973 with and for his friend Jerry



After a long hiatus, Lenny and Carla Corin are rediscovering sailing in their Montgomery 17, Orli.

Montgomery, who was already highly regarded as a designer and builder of small, fast, high-quality fiberglass daysailers, including a 12-foot Lyle Hess design. The very first examples of this compact coastal cruiser had bolted-on cast-iron fixed keels, but the more easily trailerable keel-centerboard version was better received and soon dominated production and sales. A few boats were built with flush decks and tall rigs, but the majority are the familiar trunk-cabin, keel-centerboard model we tested.

Many refinements were made during the boat's long production history. Montgomery Marine built nearly 500 M17s before delivering the last Jerry Montgomery-built boat in 1994. After that, the molds were sold. A difficult and unsettled period of several years followed, but Bob Eeg of



Nor'Sea Yachts eventually stepped in and currently produces both models under the mark of Montgomery Boats.

#### Design

The Lyle Hess pedigree is evident in the design. Better described as

"purposeful" rather than "graceful," its short overhangs, spoon bow, fine entry, simulated lapstrake topsides, and balanced proportions reflect the beautifully functional aesthetic so typical of Hess designs. Although clearly a descendent of those British working craft its designer so admired, It is not just a scaled-down version of a larger boat but a unique design, derived from and for its own purpose. Length overall is 17 feet 1 inch on a 15 feet 10 inch waterline length. The beam is 7 feet 2 inches, and the displacement of 1,550 pounds gives a moderate displacement/LWL ratio of 225.

End-grain balsa core was specified to lighten the cabin and deck, while the solid fiberglass hull is stiffened by the difficult-to-mold strakes, which also act as miniature spray rails and are essential to the strikingly distinctive character of the boat.

A keel-centerboard design with a keel-contained pendant and full-length bearing for the board was selected as the best compromise for shoal draft, structural integrity, stiffness, and sailing ability. The centerboard in early boats was a heavy iron casting, and additonal iron or steel ballast was encapsulated within the shallow keel. A slightly smaller and lighter fiberglass centerboard with a lead core replaced the ferrous version in 1987. Encapsulated lead ballast was substituted for the iron ballast, and the total ballast was increased from 550 pounds to 600 pounds at the same time. Both versions of the centerboard were shaped for maximum lift, as is the



deep but slender, vertically retractable wooden rudder. The heavy cast-iron centerboard on early models is raised by a winch mounted inside the cabin directly below the companionway. The draft is 42 inches with the board down and 21 inches with it up.

The original cabin layout included a V-berth with the head located under the starboard section, a very narrow quarter berth to starboard, and a tiny galley to port. A new interior with a full-length port-side quarter berth/settee replacing the galley was introduced in 1978, and a final version, in 1987, shortened the port quarter berth to 5 feet to make room for a larger cockpit locker.

The self-bailing cockpit is deep with high backrests and two cockpit seat hatches opening to stowage lockers. One hatch accesses a small locker at the after end of the starboard seat and a larger hatch opens to a deep locker to port. Both hatches are well drained and can be secured for sea. A wet

The companionway is wide, at left, but the hatch only slides forward 10 inches. Notable features in the spacious and comfortable cockpit are three lockers and a cutout for the outboard motor in the transom, below left.

locker incorporating improved cockpit drainage was added to the aft end of the cockpit in 1981 and, in 1984, the perforated-aluminum toerails were replaced with teak.

The masthead Marconi sloop rig is supported by six shrouds, a headstay, and a backstay and carries a total sail area of 154 square feet (100% foretriangle), for a sail area/ displacement ratio of 18.4. The standard rig (a few boats were built with a 21-inch taller mast) will clear a bridge at 25 feet 6 inches.

#### Construction

In spite of her 34 years, Orli, the test boat, displayed excellent glasswork with only a few spots of minor gelcoat crazing at corners or around heavily stressed fittings. All owners reported their boats were solidly built with no oil-canning or delamination and praised the quality of construction. Most mentioned the sturdy hardware, mast, and rigging. Sails and the standing and running rigging had, of course, been replaced on most of the older boats. A few owners reported the usual portlight leaks, balsa core saturation, and gelcoat fading typical of vintage fiberglass boats.

More common and more serious were issues with rusting of the cast-iron centerboards of the older boats and consequent binding inside the keel. Most affected owners have removed the boards, sandblasted and faired them, and coated them with epoxy. Rusting and subsequent expansion of the encapsulated ferrous ballast in the keel is even more serious, as the keel swells



Lenny and Carla use netting and bungee cords to create stowage over the quarter berth, at left. The berth is a little narrow for sleeping on. Although it's a generous 6 feet 7 inches long and 5 feet 11 inches wide, the V-berth is split by the compression post under the mast, upper right. The centerboard trunk supports the forward end of the cockpit, above right. There is no bilge, meaning water collects on the cabin sole.

and seizes the centerboard. Extensive fiberglass surgery is required to remove the iron or steel ballast and replace it with lead, and reshape and re-glass the keel. It is a testament to the perceived value of these boats that many owners have been willing to go through with such extensive repairs. Boats that have been consistently and carefully maintained seem to have avoided most

#### **Resources**

Montgomery Saiboat Owners Group: www.msog.org

Jerry Montgomery: www.jerrymontgomery.org

Montgomery Boats: www.montgomeryboats.com of these problems, even though some are nearly 40 years old.

#### Accommodations

The Corins have not used Orli for cruising yet, but many owners have. Despite one comment of, "The cabin of the M17 is not the place for a big 6-foot 6-inch guy," several said cruising was comfortable for one and possibly for two very intimate friends. No one admitted to having slept in the quarter berths. The V-berth is split by the mast support post but is 6 feet 7 inches long on centerline, 5 feet 11 inches wide at the head, 6 inches wide at the foot, and has 29 inches of headroom under the cabin trunk. A 6-foot 6-inch settee berth in the starboard quarter tapers in width from 15 inches under the cockpit seat to a maximum of 19 inches, with

10 inches from the cushion to cabin sole and 36 inches of headroom above. Under the cockpit seat, the clearance is 12 inches, and it's a little more under the gunwale — it's a good seat, but a very narrow berth. Other than being shorter, the matching settee berth to port is identical.

The portable head is stowed (and intended to be used) in a dedicated recess molded immediately forward of the athwartships bulkhead of the V-berth. It's covered by a removable portion of the starboard berth cushion. Use and operation in place are possible but extremely awkward and uncomfortable. Many owners either move the head out onto the cabin sole or use alternative systems.

From sole to overhead, the cabin headroom is 4 feet 3½ inches. The sliding companionway hatch is a

## Owners we contacted were unanimously enthusiastic about the boat's sailing characteristics.

generous 32 inches wide but slides forward only 10 inches before it hits the mast step. The hinged forward hatch, located over the V-berth, is 17½ inches wide and 14 inches fore-and-aft.

In boats that have galleys, owners tend to use them for stowage rather than food preparation. Most cruisers responding to our survey use camping gear for simple meal preparation.

The deep and secure cockpit is 5 feet 3 inches wide at the forward end and 4 feet 1 inch wide aft. The seats are 6 feet 7 inches long, 15 to 17 inches wide, and 12½ inches above the cockpit sole, and they are spaced apart 30 inches forward and 24 inches aft. The backrest/coaming is a reassuring and comfortable 15 inches high.

Some owners have slept in the cockpit during good weather and all confirmed our observation that the cockpit was quite sumptuous for three when sailing and adequate but snug for four. A number of owners rig cockpit tents when at anchor and at least one has a Bimini.

#### **Under way**

The weather for the test sail was overcast and quite still. Orli handled well under power, even when backing away from the ramp. The centerboard was lowered at launch, and the deep rudder, although a bit awkward to rig, was very effective. We hoisted the rather tired mainsail and the working jib and slowly but deliberately sailed out into the swirling currents just east of Deception Pass. In less than 5 knots of wind, it was impossible to test the vaunted sailing ability and heavy-weather prowess of the little Montgomery, but considering the extremely light fluky air and unsettled currents, the boat was responsive and well-mannered. Eventually, we gave up and returned to the ramp.

During the subsequent photo shoot with only the owners aboard, the breeze picked up a bit and the Montgomery began to show her pedigree, pointing well and tacking smartly.

Owners we contacted were unanimously enthusiastic about the boat's sailing characteristics. The M17 was consistently described as solid, stiff, stable, predictable, and fast, especially as the wind picked up. Most noted that the boat, like most masthead sloops, needs the right headsail to make good progress to weather, but with decent sails it points well for a shoal-draft minicruiser. Weather helm was not considered excessive, and the boat was said to "shoulder in" until overpowered, and then round up safely. All commented

#### Montgomery 17



LOA:	17 feet 2 inches
LWL:	15 feet 10 inches
Beam:	7 feet 4 inches
Draft board up	1 foot 9 inches
Draft board down	3 feet 6 inches
Displacement:	1,550 pounds
Ballast:	580 pounds
Sail area:	154 square fee
Disp./LWL ratio:	225
Sail area/disp. ratio:	18.4
Designer	Lyle Hes

that the boat was easy to heave-to and to reef. Most tied in the first reef when the wind speed was about 15 knots and a few had sailed in winds of 30 knots. Many felt the boat could take a lot more weather than the crew and all said it was exceptionally seaworthy, especially for its size and displacement.

It should be noted that, despite having made successful ocean passages, the M17 was not designed for serious offshore sailing. It is, after all, a light-displacement trailerable sailboat.

Our sample of owners was a mix of cruisers and racers. Some did both, and several have cruised in far-flung places, taking full advantage of the boat's trailerability. The racers seem pleased with overall performance (the average PHRF is 294), and several suggested that it is the fastest cruising boat of its size except for the much newer Montgomery-designed Sage 17.

Although a few owners use an electric or lightweight 2-horsepower gas motor, most use a long-shaft 4- or 5-horsepower four-stroke outboard that will push the boat at hull speed (5.3 knots) under most conditions. Orli's 5-horsepower outboard was mounted on a lifting bracket, rather than in the transom cutout molded into the port side of pre-1981 cockpits. Some owners maintain that fore-and-aft weight distribution is better with the motor in the cutout, rather than cantilevered behind the transom, but others suggest this is offset by lower-unit drag when the boat is heeled to port. Later boats were fitted with a retractable mount. Owners reported no bad habits when powering, but some suggested turning the motor as well as the rudder to steer in reverse.

#### Trailering and launching

The Corins rigged and launched at the excellent Cornet Bay ramp without a hitch... other than the extending trailer tongue, that is. The original steel trailer was painted rather than galvanized, and rust between the telescoping tubes made it extremely difficult to align the holes for the clevis pins. On the



With the boom as a gin pole, Lenny Corin uses the mainsheet tackle to raise the mast by himself.

other hand, the clever mast-raising rig Lenny fabricated made the hour-long rigging process look almost easy, even though it was only their fourth time out. Hauling and unrigging was uneventful as well.

Owners we contacted for the most part described the boat as relatively easy to trailer, rig, and launch, with the usual grumblings about the depth of the fixed keel and the extending trailer tongue (or lack thereof). An hour or slightly less seems to be the average rigging time.One noted that a stepladder was a big help when setting up the rig as the boat sits high due to the keel and the healthy freeboard.

Tow vehicles ranged from a turbo Subaru Forester to a Hummer H-3, with most being four-wheel-drive pickups. The smaller vehicles all towed trailers with brakes and the typical mileage penalty when towing was 2 to 4 mpg. All said towing was a breeze.

The test boat and trailer measured 22 feet 6 inches overall. The stowed mast was 8 feet 6 inches above the road at the bow pulpit and 9 feet 8 inches above the road at the stern when supported on the factory-supplied carrier that fits into the rudder gudgeons.

#### Conclusions

The Montgomery 17 is an affordable classic — a well-built, nimble, seaworthy, trailerable mini-cruiser — with a great pedigree and a loyal and experienced following. Its distinctive salty appearance and superior sailing characteristics combine with the Hess/ Montgomery mystique in a well-built, seaworthy quart-in-a-pint-pot. Current Internet prices range from a low of less than \$4,000 for a late 1970s boat to \$17,000 for a five- to seven-year-old model, depending on equipment and condition. The boat is still in production. Jerry and an active owners' group are happy to provide advice on nearly any aspect of the boat.  $\varDelta$ 

Ferd Johns and his wife, Beth, live on Whidbey Island and cruise the Pacific Northwest, Chesapeake Bay, and Florida Keys. Ferd, an architect, cannot count how many old fiberglass cruising boats he has owned (Beth, also an architect, can!), but the fleet is currently down to two trailerable sailboats and one mini trawler.

### **Comments from owners of the Montgomery 17**

"The boat is well made and stands up to a lot of weather. I was able to sail her to weather in an honest 35 knots. The gelcoat has held up amazingly well for a 30-year-old boat. The swing keel often got stuck in the stub keel. I didn't find any solutions that worked until I dropped the swing keel and had it heavily sandblasted, primed, and painted. I haven't had any problems since."

> –John Edwards, Lake Thurmond, South Carolina

"This is a beautiful boat design that has given me and my family of four a wonderful sailing experience for seven years. It sleeps two very comfortably and sails four in the same way. The cockpit is huge for a boat this size and very comfortable. It handles well in the modest winds of San Diego and the typical ocean swell we see here of 2 to 4 feet."

> -Matthew Marx, San Diego, California

"I believe my Yamaha 4-cycle 4-horsepower long-shaft is the perfect motor for the M17. I often overnight on the boat for up to two weeks at a time. I have a singleburner propane stove and a small BBO. I cook in the forward area of the cockpit and sit inside the cabin while cooking. The portable toilet is convenient and comfortable enough for me, but not for my wife. I have a homemade boom tent and use it often."

> -Randy Graves, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

"The boat is great in light air. It will not pull without a headsail. Sailing to weather with main alone will get you nowhere and the boat will hobbyhorse. My M17 heaves-to easily and quickly. I heave-to when reefing. I normally go to the first reef in the main when whitecaps form." –**Michael Bowden**,

Minneapolis, Minnesota

#### **Boat buying**



## The cost to repair vs. the cost to replace

et's say your 30-foot good old boat needs \$25,000 worth of repairs and she's only worth \$20,000. Should you make the repairs? Many dockside wags would say no. Not long ago, I noticed an article in a well-regarded sailing magazine that said if the repairs cost more than the boat is worth, you shouldn't do it. I suppose the implication is that you should sell the boat or let it deteriorate. What's a sailor to do? After all, we *have* to have boats, don't we?

Owning a boat is not a particularly rational financial decision to begin with. It's not going to add to your retirement fund. In fact, it will probably reduce your 401K even though it will enrich your life. But once you've committed to boat ownership, however irrational financially, it's still possible to use some financial tools to guide your decisions thereafter. One of the problems with examining whether or not to put a lot of money into an older boat is that the exercise is a lot less fun than sailing. However, spending a little time examining the best financial course can help improve your sailing experience.

#### This boat or that boat?

Let's start with the proposition that, as a sailor, if you sell one boat, you'll buy another. Therein lies the rub. Will it



BY CARL HUNT

make more financial sense to keep your current GOB 30 and make the expensive repairs or to buy a new or newer boat, as many wags state? The answer lies in the data.

Because you're going to own a boat, you can begin with the concept of "opportunity cost." That's the cost of an activity measured against the next best alternative not chosen. In the case of repairing your GOB 30, the next best alternative would be to buy a new Shiny 30 or a used Almostshiny 30. By comparing the expense of owning another boat to that of owning and repairing your GOB 30, you can determine if it makes financial sense to make the repairs on the GOB 30.

For the purposes of this illustration, I'll make the following assumptions:

You will keep your GOB 30, the alternative Shiny 30, or the Almost-shiny 30 for 10 years.

You will borrow money for the repairs to your GOB 30 or borrow to buy an alternative boat.

You will be able to sell your GOB 30 for \$20,000 today or for \$20,000 in 10 years.

A Shiny 30 or Almost-shiny 30 will depreciate at a rate of 5 percent per year.

You have good credit and can borrow at a rate of 4 percent.

Maintenance and upgrades on your GOB 30 will be \$3,500 per year.

Maintenance and upgrades on a Shiny 30 will be \$2,000 per year.

Maintenance and upgrades on an Almost-shiny 30 will be \$3,000 per year.

Using this information, you can determine whether it makes financial sense to hang on to your GOB 30, buy a new Shiny 30, or look instead for a 10-year-old Almost-shiny 30. I also included in the calculations a 20-year-old Not-so-shiny 30 in case your pockets are not deep enough to handle the more expensive boats.

#### Good old inexpensive

As you can see from the table, the most financially responsible choice is to repair and keep your GOB 30. (I could have imagined a different outcome that would favor a new or newer boat by changing some of the assumptions and data. But I didn't, because then there wouldn't have been an article.)

Note that the table doesn't include the total cost of boat ownership. Its focus is only on major differences in expenses. Many of the costs, such as moorage, will be the same for all options. Besides, including the total cost of boat ownership might cause you to experience some depression and perhaps lead to increased consumption of spirits.

The outcome of your analysis will depend on your situation. Don't automatically assume that keeping your GOB 30, no matter how emotionally satisfying, is the most financially appropriate option. Use the data as a guide and make it specific to your particular circumstances. Fortunately, calculators and computer programs make it easy to crunch the numbers. You don't have to know the specific equations or do the math yourself, unless you are so inclined. After all, some people like to varnish teak.

#### The upgrade analogy

The same analysis can help with other aspects of boat ownership. To use a personal example, some years ago we thought it would be nice to have an aft cabin. We tend to have guests aboard for a week or two each year. We felt it would be more comfortable for all involved if each couple had a private cabin. We couldn't retrofit our good old boat to make this possible. I calculated the cost of an aft cabin, based on the prices of different boats with the

#### Ownership costs compared

	GOB 30	Shiny 30	Almost-shiny 30	Not-so-shiny 30
Maintenance and upgrades	\$35,000	\$20,000	\$30,000	\$35,000
Loan payment	\$30,373	\$145,792	\$110,650	\$48,598
Depreciation	\$0	\$58,926	\$35,777	\$19,642
Total cost	\$65,373	\$224,718	\$176,427	\$103,240
Less selling price	\$20,000	\$91,074	\$55,297	\$30,358
Net cost	\$45,373	\$133,644	\$121,130	\$72,882



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characteristics we wanted. I determined that an aft cabin would cost us between \$50,000 and \$100,000. For this price, we determined that we could happily continue converting the main saloon settee to a double berth. If we needed more privacy and we were sailing in an area with hotels, it would be much cheaper to rent a hotel room. If we were in the wilderness and really needed more privacy, someone could sleep on the beach. Even chartering a boat for a week or two a year would be a better financial option.

#### **Emotion sometimes wins**

On the other hand (a well-worn economics term), you have to keep in mind that there is an emotional aspect to boat ownership. I once had a boat neighbor who owned a Hinckley Bermuda 40. He put three times as much money into that boat as he would ever get out of it. He loved that boat and so did I.

As this example illustrates, financial calculations do not have to be the determining factor in your whether-to-sell-or-maintain decision-making process. After all, at \$200,000 a pop, how many of us would choose to have children if we based our decision solely on the cost of raising them?

Instead, the finances should be only one aspect, albeit a grounding one, for your decisions. Emotion can and does sometimes trump the bottom line. I'm guilty of succumbing. Now that I've moved into my seventh decade, we're thinking about replacing our good old boat with one that's easier to sail and has more creature comforts. The cost of this change is going to be nearly as expensive as putting our kids through college ... but the ability to sail for another 10 to 15 years? Priceless. *A*  Carl Hunt is a semi-retired economist living in Colorado. He has sailed for more than 30 years and has cruised his boats from British Columbia to Mexico. He has also chartered and cruised other people's boats throughout the eastern United States and the Gulf of Mexico, the Caribbean, the Mediterranean, and other parts of the world.









Raceboats raft together against the backdrop of the Empress Hotel, at top. A high-tech speed machine, a modern fiberglass cruiser/racer, and a wooden cruiser, above, show three very different bows. Skipper Brian Arthur (holding *Good Old Boat*) and the crew of his 1973 Islander 36, *Cheetah*, are ready for some fun, below.

# Swiftsure

hile I've sailed and cruised much of my life, I've never been a racer, never even attended a race. So the day before the start of the 2013 Swiftsure International Yacht Race last May, when I set out to meet the skippers and their crews, I didn't expect to find folks with whom I'd have much in common.

> The Swiftsure Race, the grand dame of yacht racing in the Pacific Northwest, has been a fixture for more than 70 years. Crowds in the Inner Harbor of Victoria, British Columbia, were swelling and buzzing; something big was happening. Tents were up, banners were flying, and merchants were selling — offering Swiftsure discounts and hawking Swiftsure shirts and souvenirs.

At the nearby customs dock, sailboats from U.S. ports like Portland, Seattle, and Port Townsend tied up one after the other to check in. Canadian boats from Vancouver, Nanaimo, and all around Victoria went directly to the city docks in front of the Empress Hotel. All winter long these docks had been home to only a dozen boats, but now there were more than a hundred, most rafted, many three-deep, all dressed with burgees and pennants strung up the masts.

#### A race around a lightship

In 1909, the United States anchored a lightship on the 100-foot-deep Swiftsure Bank, 15 miles northwest of Cape Flattery at the northwestern tip of Washington state. This lightship served as an aid to navigation at the dangerous and confusing entrance to the Strait of Juan de Fuca. From 1930, the lightship served as the rounding point for the occasionally run Swiftsure Lightship Cup race. After WWII, in 1947, the Swiftsure Trophy Race was

officially organized and the anchored lightship spent the final 20 years of its service life as the mark for the 139-mile yacht race from Victoria. These days, the Canadian navy ceremoniously anchors a ship in the same spot to serve as the rounding mark for the sailboats and as a safety resource.

The Swiftsure Race attracts a couple hundred boats that race simultaneously on four courses, ranging from the 139-nautical-mile Lightship Classic — an overnight race that runs the length of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, around the Swiftsure Bank northwest of Cape Flattery, and back — to the 19-mile Inshore Classic that begins in Victoria, runs along the south coast of Vancouver Island, and ends at the Royal Victoria Yacht Club on a course that varies, as it is set each year according to wind and tide. While a host of sexy, big-dollar sleds competes in the long-distance Lightship Classic race, the short Inshore Classic race, introduced in 2004 and sponsored by *Good Old Boat* magazine, boasts the most entrants (about 60). This shorter race is sailed almost exclusively by owner-skippers — serious racers,



## A race for chariots and classics alike

#### BY MICHAEL ROBERTSON

I assumed, who don't suffer non-racers gladly. It quickly became clear, however, that Swiftsure is for every type of sailor.

Sailboat racing takes place year-round in the straits and sounds of the Pacific Northwest and it isn't for the faint-of-heart. Floating logs, crab traps, strong tidal currents, and sometimes very light winds — especially at night — are a challenge for Swiftsure competitors. The Swiftsure Inshore Classic has classes for boats with and without flying sails, making it accessible to all sailors. For the three long-distance courses, part of the challenge is the likelihood of light winds at some time during the race, often during the night, when "Driftsure" conditions prevail.

#### Swiftsure regulars

The first Swiftsure competitor I encountered was *Annie*, a 1977 C&C 24. There were duct tape repairs on her hatch, her companionway slat was unfinished plywood, and a teddy bear sat in a bosun's chair halfway up the mast. Skipper Roger Aubin beamed from the cockpit.

"I've been racing Swiftsure for 11 years," he told me. "We won our division in 2009." *Annie* takes part in the 79.7-nautical-mile Juan de Fuca course, the third-longest course, that always takes his modest craft at least 24 hours to complete. Roger credits his success to Swiftsure-itis, a condition he claims allows him to forget everything but the beginning and the end of the race so he returns each year, forgetting the cold, damp night that awaits him. "That's the hardest part of this race."

He says one of the greatest things about the race is the volunteers. "There are hundreds of them, always helpful, always excited to see you — they make all the racers feel like rock stars."

Roger won the Swiftsure in 2009 using his anchor. "Toward the end of the race," he says, "we had a strong opposing tide and only zephyrs that everyone was trying unsuccessfully to capture. We dropped the hook and waited for hours while everyone slipped miles behind us."

*Annie* wasn't the kind of raceboat I expected to see — and Roger wasn't the kind of skipper I expected to meet. Wandering into the crowds packing the docks, I was surprised by the diversity of racing boats. Some were sleek, open-transom, dual-helm thoroughbreds. But there were also 100-year-old wooden schooners, heavy-displacement cruising boats, and lots of 1970s- and '80s-vintage good old boats. I stopped and smiled when I saw skipper Glen Shippam's Newport 27, *Compromise*, valued at about \$8,000, rafted up to *Neptune's Car*, a pristine Santa Cruz 70 valued at about 100 times as much — both boats in Swiftsure, their crews partying together.

And though *Compromise* is no sled, her 72-year-old owner/skipper and age-diverse crew of four, some in their 20s, often race together on Wednesday nights and win. They're obviously an effective and happy team. After the race they told me about how one of *Compromise*'s halyards jumped the masthead sheave 10 minutes before the starting gun. They all laughed, each eager to tell how they quickly hauled crewmember Jordan Lothrop up the mast, fixed the problem, and brought







Glen Shippam's Newport 27, *Compromise*, worth about \$8,000, lies rafted up to the Santa Cruz 70, *Neptune's Car*, worth about \$800,000, at top. Their crews race and party together regardless. Roger Aubin, center, skipper of the 1977 C&C 24, *Annie*, has been racing Swiftsure for 11 years. Skipper Judy Nasmith (with the short gray hair and glasses) includes her dog Bailey in her racing crew aboard the Perry-designed 1988 Nordic 44, *Annie*, above.





him down in time to shut off the engine seconds before the four-minute preparatory signal flag was raised.

Another *Annie* participating in Swiftsure is a 1988 Robert Perry-designed Nordic 44. The 28,000-pound cruising boat is owned and skippered by Judy Nasmith, a yacht broker and former Hobie 16 Women's National Champion. She and her crew of eight — all friends and including her dog,



Brian Arthur is the owner/skipper of *Cheetah*, a 1973 Islander 36. "I'm an Islander guy!" he says. "Before this I owned an Islander 28 and I've owned two Islander 24s." Brian is a Swiftsure vet who won the race overall in 1985 and placed third two years ago. But his fun-loving crew of four doesn't let him take himself or racing too seriously. "Ask him how old he is!" they shout at me from the cockpit, taunting Brian, who waves his arm at them to keep quiet. "He's 80!"

"Not until July," corrects the skipper with the long, white hair and surfing T-shirt.

Across the dock I found Brian Countryman, who has raced Swiftsure 15 times aboard his 1983 Hans Christian 33, *Mimoza*. While he returns to the Swiftsure every year, this Washington state winemaker doesn't race otherwise. "We do the Swiftsure because we love it. It's a great vibe, there's an international spirit and, even among the really competitive types, everyone's friendly."

#### Last year's trophies

The camaraderie among skippers is evident at the packed pre-race skippers' meeting at a local nightclub. Swiftsure chair, Vern Burkhardt, says from the podium, "This is the only race I know that has a party before the race and congratulates its winners a year later!" With this, the room erupts in applause and beers are raised. Everyone's there to have a good time and applaud the winners from the previous year as they accept trophies. "We'd love to celebrate after the race," he adds, "but we can't depend on everyone being able to stick around."

Swiftsure happens each year during the U.S. Memorial Day weekend. Race check-in and pre-race festivities take place on Thursday and Friday. After the skippers' meeting Friday evening, a band entertains until 11 p.m. in the Swiftsure Lounge (a large tent near the race docks). Early Saturday morning, rafted boats begin peeling off and there's an exodus as boats leave the harbor. Bleary-eyed skippers have to motor their boats about 5 miles to the starting area for the 9 a.m. start of the first race. Racers entered in the 19-mile Inshore Classic will arrive at the finish line in front of the Royal Victoria Yacht Club later on Saturday in time for a late-afternoon barbecue. Boats competing in the three longer courses won't finish until Sunday or even Monday morning (the deadline for finishing is 6 a.m. Monday).

Jerry Barnes and Elaine Bock of Portland, Oregon, were among the early finishers at the barbecue. The couple met on a daysail five years ago and have been together ever since. Jerry races *Desperado*, a New York 36, often, though conservatively. "I tell my crew my job is to make the boat





Raceboats fly spinnakers on a run to the finish, at left. The crew of *Compromise*, a Newport 27, is prepared for wet weather, below. From left, they are skipper Wayne VanTassle, Jan Drent, Neil Cameron, Glen Shippam, Jordan Thisdelle, and Jordan Lothrop.

safe, their

job is to make it go fast,

and when the two goals don't align, my goal prevails."

Of the race they have just completed, he says, "It was just a really, really fun day — just perfect. One of the 'funnest' races I've ever done."

I nod, lost in thought. My 1978 Fuji 40 is no match for a Santa Cruz 70 nor any of the snazzy J/Boats, but it would have been fun to tweak and trim a little, maybe see if I couldn't keep up with Jerry and Elaine, and perhaps inch my way to the starting line ahead of *Desperado*. Heck, my 31 feet of waterline should allow me to sail right by the Hans Christian 33, *Mimoza*. All I'd need is a good blow to charge past the crew of whippersnappers aboard *Compromise* and the 24-foot *Annie*...

I need to reexamine our cruising plans for next year, maybe plan to get our *Del Viento* up north again in time for Memorial Day weekend and maybe see what it might take to enter the Swiftsure. It would be a blast.  $\Delta$ 

Michael Robertson and his wife, Windy, bought a cruising sailboat in Mexico, sold their home in Washington, D.C., and dropped out of their high-pressure lives in 2011 to voyage with their daughters, Eleanor (10) and Frances (7). After more than a year cruising the North Pacific coastline from Cabo San Lucas to Alaska's Glacier Bay aboard their Fuji 40, Del Viento, they are currently in Mexico, enjoying the beautiful Sea of Cortez. They document their journey at www.logofdelviento.blogspot.com.






"For the truth is that I already know as much about my fate as I need to know. The day will come when I will die. So the only matter of consequence before me is what I will do with my allotted time. I can remain on shore paralyzed with fear. Or I can raise my sails and dip and soar in the breeze." –Richard Bode

When we finally pulled into Santa Barbara Harbor, we still had the ashes. We'd never committed them to the Pacific. We hadn't let them swirl in the cold sea winds. Neither my friend Jacob Ells nor I ever found out exactly how the 74-year-old died. We'd never actually met him. The rumor around Oakland's 5th Avenue Marina was that, while serving in the Vietnam War as a pilot, Jurgen Arnsdorff had been in a fiery crash and breathed fumes that had damaged his lungs. It was believed that they eventually caved in on him.

Not long after Jurgen's death, Jacob bought Jurgen's 1967 Pearson Invicta II, *La Flaneur*, from his long-time girlfriend. Though it had been sitting for a year, it wasn't hard to tell Jurgen had loved the classic fiberglass racer. From the halyards to the fuel filters, he'd hand-painted hundreds of parts his favorite color — green. He'd customized the inside of the roomy cabin and refitted the deck. Other than the engine, the 38-foot yawl was set to cross oceans.

As Jacob explored his new vessel, he found the lockers and lazarettes filled with a treasure trove of spare parts and pieces, and the girlfriend called often with more useful bits she'd found among the boxes and bins of her Bay Area condo. It was during one of these calls she asked us to take Jurgen's ashes to sea. In a breeze, we accepted.

## Jurgen joins the crew

At the time it seemed natural, just another ripple in the hurricane of preparations for our first offshore voyage, something every new boat owner did. In our mid-20s, we hadn't buried many people. Our understanding of a funeral was a circle of crying friends and relatives dressed in black, a hole in a grassy cemetery, and a rock with a name and dates carved into it. We knew that choosing someone's grave must be done with reverence and respect. But really, we thought we'd just dump the old guy overboard and be done with it.

Upon our visit, the girlfriend, also very much along in years, hesitantly sent us off with the remains in a heartshaped urn along with two small food barrels and a panel for our windvane. No instructions for burial. No recommendation for a final resting place. When we got back to the boat, Jurgen went on a shelf with other necessary cruising supplies: a crossbow, a trumpet, a bean plant, and a pair of duck eggs we had high hopes of incubating.

The next few months were spent outfitting. The crusty tinkerers who hang around 5th Avenue's wobbling docks knew Jurgen. As Jacob tweaked his new engine, they told him about Jurgen's cruise to Europe and through the Panama

Jacob Ells contemplates the Pacific Ocean from the deck of his Pearson Invicta II, *Genesis Earthling*, formerly *La Flaneur*, whose previous owner's ashes he and Dylan had promised to scatter at sea. Canal on the same boat. They talked of his craftiness and his playboy nature. They pointed to the well-designed galley with a Force 10 stove and lines of spice-jar holders as evidence of Jurgen's culinary prowess.

As we got to know the boat, we got to know her previous owner. In the V-berth, we found a picture of a naked woman, just a torso with arms raised. In one of the lockers, we found scuba gear. In the head, we discovered tiny platforms fit exclusively to his toiletries. From *Sailing the Farm* to *The Riddle of the Dinosaur*, we read his books. Jacob even donned Jurgen's bright red foul weather gear on occasion.

It became common to include our cremated crewmate in conversation. We'd tell people how we'd been asked to spread the ashes and they'd ask who this man was. We always told them what we knew. Our parents and relations became familiar with the story and they often offered unique ways to dispose of him.

"Maybe you should sprinkle him into the paint and varnish, so he'll become part of the boat," my mom had suggested. She's an artist.

Jacob's dad often forgot the old man's name and called him "Yurdigan." He's an engineer. Nonetheless, they were both friendly to him.

## A vague plan

With small savings put aside, both Jacob and I had quit our jobs to embark. We figured we would go where the wind took us when it took us. Our intended direction from San Francisco was south, but we had little set in stone after Southern California. Maybe we'd take the trades over to Hawaii then on to the Line Islands, Fiji, and the tropics. We'd find work in New Zealand for a few months and just keep going. That was just one of our many ideas.

We started down the California coast. Jurgen now had a special place on the shelf, surrounded by many of his former belongings. A fresh breeze and clear sky gently delivered us to Half Moon Bay. We thanked Jurgen. When the engine died just around Point Conception, we cursed him. The chain of calamities and small successes led us to Santa Barbara.

There were a few occasions when we could have scattered the ashes, but at no point did it really seem right to make Jurgen walk the plank and sail off without him in his own boat. For the time being, we decided we'd keep him on board. It seemed to us that's where most mariners prefer to be. We would keep looking for a suitable place and waiting for the appropriate time. It might be a little odd to wander around the world with the remains of a man we've never met. But, I suppose, stranger things have happened at sea.  $\varDelta$ 

Dylan Silver is a freelance writer and photographer based in California. When he's not sailing, he's wandering the mountains and coast, always on the lookout for stories and adventure.

**Note:** Dylan wrote to tell us he and Jacob ended up burying Jurgen when they were exactly halfway between California and Hawaii –**Eds**.

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## *Entr'acte's*

## Where the on-watch crew stays warm and dry

**BY ED ZACKO** 

ur Maestro seat proved successful on all counts. From a beat to a beam reach, the watchkeeper remained sheltered, warm, and dry behind the dodger. Once the wind went aft of the beam, however, the shelter of the dodger disappeared and night watches once again became a rather cold experience. Returning to the bubble-turret concept, I came up with a nifty addition that I fashioned from Sunbrella scraps left over from our new sailcover and old plastic from the time Ellen redid our cockpit enclosure.

I dubbed my creation the Bubble of Comfort. It's essentially a see-through curtain that zips onto the aft edge of the dodger and attaches to the sides of the dodger flaps with Velcro strips. The result looks like a giant turret. Inside the Bubble, the watch sits comfortably on the Maestro seat (see January 2014) and enjoys a 360-degree view, but is sheltered from wind, seas, and rain.

Part of our pre-departure preparation is to zip the Bubble onto the dodger and roll it up out of the way until we want it. When we need it, we drop it down, use two lines to secure it aft into the cockpit, and Velcro the sides into place. Everything we need to operate our Nor'Sea 27, *Entr'acte*, is accessible from inside the Bubble: engine controls, autopilot remote, VHF radio, and chart plotter. During long periods of rain, we have even led the Aries steering lines inside the Bubble. No need to go out into the bad weather unless you absolutely have to!

Besides keeping the night watch warm and dry in following winds, the Bubble also prevents cold damp wind and fog from entering the main cabin. Before we had the Bubble, sailing downwind in damp conditions proved to be just as cold and damp below as topside, but no longer. These days, the off watch and cabin also remain warm and dry.

## Shelter and security

To exit the Bubble, a simple slice of the hand parts the Velcro and we have instant access to the cockpit. It's an iron-clad rule that our safety harness



Ellen pops out of *Entr'acte's* Bubble of Comfort to find the sun is shining, top of page. When closed (1), the Bubble protects the watchstander, sitting on the Maestro seat, from weather from aft. A swipe of the hand opens the side for a peep outside (2). The Bubble zips onto the dodger (3).

tethers are snapped on before we exit the Bubble.

A word on the safety harness: between the Maestro seat and the Bubble of Comfort, the watch can become so comfortable that complacency sets in and it's easy to forget where we are. If we must attend to some ship's business in a hurry, it is best to be prepared.

Our harness system consists of two full-length Spectra jacklines, port and starboard, each with its own tether permanently attached. The harness ends of both tethers reside on hooks inside the main companionway. Our harness rule is simple: no one sits alone on the Maestro seat unless he or she is clipped to the windward tether. If we are both awake, we relax that rule a bit but, at night, or whenever one of us is asleep, the one sitting in the Maestro seat snaps on. Period! If we must leave that seat or exit the Bubble for any reason, we are already clipped on. We know we're the most vulnerable at the moment when we exit the main hatchway, especially when we're





# **Bubble of Comfort**

half-asleep and in a hurry. The old sages always caution us to "clip on before exiting the companionway." Light conditions are more deadly than heavy weather. It is amazing what can happen in less than a second!

## **Materials**

If you do much canvaswork, you might have some of the materials already. Sailrite can supply everything listed.

## Sunbrella or similar fabric –

The quantity of fabric will depend on your boat's size. We used less than a yard of what would have been scraps.

*Plastic window material* – We used 2 yards. Lighter gauge is better for ease of stowage.

*Velcro strips* – We prefer a 2-inch width of the woolly or soft side on the dodger flaps. The Bubble uses one-inch widths of the sticky or hook side. This makes for easier attachment when the wind's blowing.

*Stainless-steel sailcover hooks* – Two are needed for the lines going aft into the cockpit.

*Zipper* – A nylon separating zipper sized to the curve of the dodger.

*Edging* – The finished edges can be turned over and sewn or covered with edging for a better look.

## Construction

The Bubble is constructed in three pieces. The center piece is a rectangle that is mostly clear plastic. Each side is roughly triangular in shape to give the finished Bubble a somewhat circular shape when zipped and Velcroed into place.

The center section has a small grommet on each side at the bottom with a small line attached. The lines attach to hooks set into the sides of

## Resources

Sailrite www.sailrite.com the cockpit to pull the Bubble into its circular shape, stabilize it against wind and spray, and add to the amount of usable space inside.

## Installation considerations

*Entr'acte's* sun awning is independent of the dodger, so attaching the Bubble was as easy as adding a zipper to the flap on the aft edge of the dodger. If you have a sun awning that zips onto your dodger, you have two choices. You can unzip the sun top and stow it whenever you want to use the Bubble. (If you need the Bubble, you probably don't need the sun awning.) However, this approach might become a nuisance. Another solution might be to install a small flap with its own zipper just below and inboard of the point where the sun awning attaches to the metal dodger frame.

## Stowing the Bubble

Our normal stowage procedure is to roll up the Bubble and lay it on top of the dodger where it becomes sandwiched between the top of the dodger and the sun awning. If our sun awning has been rolled up, we flip the Bubble over the top of the dodger and tie the corners to the handholds until we need it.

Other storage options would be to add grommets to the flaps where the dodger zips onto its frame and install ties to these grommets. Alternatively, you could unzip the Bubble and stow it. The problem with this approach is that you won't be ready when a sudden squall comes up.

Since we have begun using the Bubble offshore, we have been warm and dry when the wind is astern. The cold night air doesn't bother us. It is indeed a Bubble of Comfort.  $\varDelta$ 

Ed Zacko is a Good Old Boat contributing editor. He and Ellen met while playing in the orchestra of a Broadway musical. They built their Nor'Sea 27, Entr'acte, from a bare hull and since 1980 have sailed thousands of miles on both sides of the Atlantic and in the Pacific. After shipping Entr'acte from Noumea to France, they are in Seville. Follow them at www.enezacko.com.









The sides of the Bubble close with Velcro (4). When erected, the Bubble is almost round (5), held in shape by strings that tie the bottom skirt to hooks in the cockpit (6). To stow the Bubble, Ed and Ellen roll it up and stuff it between the dodger and the sunshade (7).

## **Useful modifications**

## An inspired table

Taking a leaf out of Good Old Boat

I was intrigued by an article by John Lively in the May 2009 issue of *Good Old Boat*, "The Case for Books." John replaced the factory bulkhead-mounted table on his Catalina 36 with a much more convenient and useful bookcase and fold-down table. John's article inspired me to make a similar modification to our Catalina 36. If not for John's article, I'd still be in the pondering stage. I'm pleased with the result, which follows his concept with a few variations in the details.

My first priority was to ensure I could set up the table with ease. Storage would be a secondary feature. I don't need to store lots of books, but I could use the space to relieve storage in the

galley and other areas. I also wanted to keep the cabinet shallow; mine is only about 5 inches deep.

A big difference between my approach and John's was that I wanted to be able to convert the dinette area to a small double sleeping berth, mainly to handle grandkid weekends. I left the area under the cabinet open to let me set a couple of plywood panels in place to support the cushions for the double berth. This part of the project is still a work in progress. I'm planning a small removable table



BY CHUCK RUSHING

Chuck liked the look of the table John Lively built for his Catalina 36 and took several cues from it for a new table in his own Catalina 36, above. He didn't make his storage shelves as deep, and attached the fiddles to the bookends so he could adjust the height of the shelves, at left. Stowed, the table takes up very little room, below.



about 8 inches deep to rest at settee level under the cabinet. This is on my list of winter projects.

I departed again from John's design by making my shelves adjustable in height. (That's not likely to happen, but I wanted to keep the option.) That meant my fiddles had to move with the shelves while also allowing me to reposition the bookends that I patterned after John's system. The result was my "floating fiddles" that basically rest on each pair of bookends to hold stuff in place. Time will tell if this works out, but so far so good. (I am building the fiddle for the top shelf this winter — I ran out of wood.)

I used cherry for the solid wood parts and teak plywood for the tabletop. Cherry was about half the cost of teak and I figured (hoped) the finished product would blend with the teak the builder used throughout the cabin. This worked out nicely when I applied a natural unstained finish to all of the new surfaces.  $\Delta$ 

Chuck Rushing is a self-taught sailor. He began at age 12 in an 8-foot pram he and his father built from a Sears kit and is still learning 55 years later. Chuck and his wife, Judy, now happily sail their Catalina 36, Anabel, out of Solomons, Maryland, cruising Chesapeake Bay and adjacent waters.

**Rigging matters** 

## A Bermudan sloop gets an unusual makeover

**BY ANNIE HILL** 

# Building a junk rig

or many years and more than 110,000 miles, I happily sailed aboard a 34-foot, junkrigged plywood dory. This rig was brought to the attention of small-boat sailors by Blondie Hasler when he sailed his modified 25-foot Folkboat, *Jester*, in the first Single-Handed Transatlantic Race with a single junk sail. (Note: For more about Blondie and Jester, see our article in the September 2002 issue. –Eds.)

Although the rig bears many similarities to those used in Chinese working boats, Hasler's genius was in seeing how it could be adapted for singlehanding. In its ultimate setup, the sailor does not have to do any deck work at all: sail can be made, lowered, and controlled from one place with the operator almost entirely sheltered. Self-steering controls are also led within reach of this area.

The junk rig has so many advantages that, to those of us who have sailed

with it, it's a continuing mystery as to why it has never caught on. The ease of reefing is incomparable - it takes longer to describe than to do. The sail is divided laterally by a number of battens that take the stress off the fabric. These battens are generally used to delineate each reef (although there is no reason to be pedantic about this) so the right amount of sail can be set for the prevailing wind. The ease with which this can be done means that, when sailing into or out of an anchorage, the boat can be maneuvered under easy canvas at a pace that allows time to think. As the sail is fully automatic, all that's required when tacking is to put the helm down, so the helmsman can concentrate on positioning the boat exactly where he wants it. This makes one much more likely to do things under sail, a source of great satisfaction to most sailors.

Junk-rigged boats have no wire standing rigging, thereby reducing cost,

windage, and worry while enabling the sail to be fully squared away when running. This minimizes the chance of an inadvertent jibe and makes it possible to sail by the lee to an astonishing degree, making downwind sailing in a narrow, winding channel more relaxing than with other rigs.

Because the battens support the sail, the sailcloth needs to be neither strong nor particularly dimensionally stable, so fabric can be chosen for longevity and ease of sewing. This makes it easier for an amateur to make a sail. The lower battens along the straight leech of the sail are controlled by sheetlets controlled by the mainsheet. This reduces the loads on sheet and sail, so smaller rope sizes can be used.

Annie Hill and Trevor Robertson sail *Badger* off Falmouth, England, at the beginning of a cruise that lasted many years and covered many miles and instilled in Annie the love for the junk rig that she harbors to this day. When it's lowered, the sail falls into lazy-jacks; all that's required is for the sheet to be hauled in to stop the sail bundle from being a nuisance. There's no need to tie the sail down (or to tie in reef points, for that matter) or even to cover the sail if it's made of waterproof, sun-proof cloth.

The junk rig's only drawback is that when the sail is made with flat panels and fitted to the typical short, fat cruising boat's hull, performance to windward is less than startling. Many people insist on citing reduced speed to windward as a disadvantage of the rig, but since the overwhelming majority of sailors appear to reach for the iron topsail when the alternative is to beat, I don't understand why people make such a fuss about it. In recent years, sailmakers have started to introduce camber into junk sails, making them much more powerful when closehauled. Boats with these sails perform as well as their Bermudan-rigged sisters when beating to windward.

## A yen for a junk rig

Since that unhappy day when *Badger* sailed out of my life, I had missed sailing with a junk rig. I am, I suspect, the world's laziest sailor. I enjoy the way of a boat under sail, maneuvering the boat in close quarters, even steering when daysailing, as long as the boat is going more or less in the right direction and there's lots to look at. What I don't enjoy is fiddling with bits of string or physically handling sails. I get frightened on the foredeck and a flogging sail turns my knees to jelly.

Alone after 35 years spent sailing as part of a couple, I decided it was time to have my own boat, to be able to do with it as I chose, and to be able to make my own decisions without compromise. Although boating is very popular in New Zealand, I was living on South Island where few boats were for sale. Reducing the choice even more, I had a very limited budget. At the time, there were very few junk-rigged boats in the country and

the only one for sale was way beyond my means. Some will say my devotion to the junk rig borders on obsessive, but I included Bermudan rigs in my search. I found a boat, delightful in all other respects, that was only about 10 percent more than I could afford and, within a few weeks of first seeing her, became the owner of a Raven 26.

The boat was moored in Waikawa, more than 100 miles away, and to get her home I had to undertake a winter passage in the Cook Strait. Already during this first small adventure I had privately condemned her rig. While the roller-furling headsail was easy to use, the genoa car was not. If I didn't adjust it, however, the

sail set worse and worse as I rolled it in. To avoid that problem, I put a reef in the mainsail instead. What a performance! The so-called "jiffy" reefing took forever. The internal halyard was led back to the cockpit and several trips were required to lower sufficient sail and then raise some of it back up. The logic of the system failed me. Surely it would be much easier to handle the halyard from the mast, as I had to go there anyway to wrestle with sail slides and hook the cringle onto the boom. By the time I had finished, I was contemplating alternatives.

## A conversion is hatched

My onboard library contained a copy of Practical Junk Rig by Jock McLeod and Blondie Hasler. It's considered the bible in the world of junks. It shows complete amateurs how to design and build junk rigs for their boats and I studied it in detail. I generally kept the idea to myself, knowing what most people would think, but when I mentioned it to another junkie (an apt word, as adherents of the rig tend to get addicted to it), David was eager to help. He was at the other end of the country, but it's amazing what can be done with a little email and a lot of text messaging. I sent a drawing of the hull and rig, asking where the mast and mast step should be located.

Since I was reluctant to have the mast come through the head of my bunk, the design was less straightforward than it might have been. This arrangement meant that the mast needed to be raked forward but, as this would help the sail hang out when running in very light wind in a slop, this was an advantage. I tend to emphasize this reason when asked about my forward-leaning mast. (To a friend who was shocked that I put comfort in harbor before sailing considerations, I pointed out that I would spend more time lying in my bunk in harbor than under

Fitting a junk rig on a Raven 26 took some imagination, but the result is a sail that has close to the same area as the boat's original sails and is much easier to handle.



The panels of a junk sail of the type Annie made are joined together with lens-shaped pieces of fabric to give them camber, at left. When Annie was lofting the sails on the workbench by herself, at right, she used lead weights to hold down one end of each tape measure.

way!) As I find forward-raking masts on junks enchanting, I was delighted with this solution.

While David pondered, I toiled away at my drawings. I kept *Practical Junk Rig* at my elbow while working up a sail plan. One morning I opened my inbox and there was a PDF document with a perfectly executed sail plan. (David understands CAD programs.)

I had intended to do everything myself, but am not so foolish as to turn down the best of help for the worst of reasons. Another junkie, in the midst of refitting a 32-foot steel ketch in Auckland, offered me the use of a good sewing machine, a large table, and some "spare" sailcloth ... enough to build the sail David had designed.

Suddenly, from toying with a future plan, I was committed to an imminent project.

I was shown to a superb workshop that included the large table on which I could lay out fabric. Then Paul, my kind host, went back to his boat. The first hitch came when I realized the table was insufficiently long for me to cut full-length panels from the sailcloth (a polyester awning material called Odyssey). As there was just enough material, I wanted as little scrap as possible. Paul (also at home with CAD programs) reckoned he could knock out patterns to minimize waste. This he did, and I got out the scissors and started cutting and sewing. This was fairly straightforward.

#### Loft and cut

I am not good at planning too many steps at a time, and I can find myself reaching a stage where I am unable to see where to go next. When I started to cut the material, I didn't know exactly how I would get to the end result. But once the material for the panels was sewn together, I could begin to see the whole process.

The latest thinking in the junk rig world is that it's possible and beneficial to put camber in the sail, eliminating the weaknesses that plague flexible battens. But things are not as you might expect: instead of the camber being along the *height* of the sail, it's along its *length* between the battens. There are several ways of achieving this. I used a method whereby lens-shaped pieces of fabric are sewn to the straight edges of the generally asymmetric panels.

The lenses decrease in size as they go up the sail and therefore require some basic lofting techniques, but the panels were more demanding. I started with the lenses to get the feel of things.



As the sail grew in size, Annie found herself shoving ever larger bundles of assembled fabric across the table as she sewed, at left. When she had completed most of the sewing, she suspended the sail from the boom, at right, to check her handiwork. The material is used for awnings.



This went well, so I began to loft and cut the panels. To do this, I had to measure the diagonals and — as the sail is more than 16 feet long from leech to luff — this was not straightforward. I found a couple of lead weights and weighed down one end of the tape measure while moving the other end.

As I cut the panels, I marked "top," "bottom," "luff," and "leech." For good measure, I added such notes as "to lens number 4." I tried everything I could think of to ensure that nothing went wrong with the assembly. Odyssey is coated on one side; the coated side is shiny and the other is matte. I also had to take into account that the panels could not be accidentally reversed. In fact, I only had to undo one seam: a batten pocket that I sewed on wrongside-up. All my graffiti paid off.

The final cutting job was the batten pockets. I had decided to fit them full-length. Because my mast was to have a 6-degree rake, I had difficulty working out just where the battens would lie against the mast. This made it impossible to be sure where the batten parrels (that hold the

battens against the mast and stop the sail from blowing away from the mast) would have to be tied. I opted to forget about this problem for the moment and cut away the necessary material when I bent on the sail. Because Odyssey is coated, it doesn't tend to fray.

#### Sew and finish

Once my pieces were cut, I was ready to sew. I started at the top, because those panels are smaller and easier to handle. In addition, the top of the sail is cut flat (as this is the area that stays up in heavy weather), so there were no lenses to sew. After that, I would sew a panel to a lens, sew on the next panel, then sew a batten pocket over the middle of the lens. This way, I was working on the edge of the sail. It all went surprisingly smoothly, although my stitching was far from straight or regular. When I first started joining the panels, I rolled the sail I had already made into a tube, thinking this would be easier to push along the table, but it was reluctant to slide over the rough chipboard surface. Eventually I just shoved mountains of material back and forth. While this technique allowed the machine's foot to do its thing and feed the fabric through, it was far from perfect.

I attached boltropes at the foot and head, to enable the sail to be slid into the slots on yard and boom, and sewed webbing on the luff and leech. Then I reinforced the corners and cut off all the long ends. The sail was finished. I hoisted it up on its boom and was not displeased with the result. I should have added grommets above and below each batten so I could lace them together should a batten break or a panel tear, but I had none available and put it off for another day.

#### A new mast

Now that I had a sail, it was time to think about the mast. It might seem that the sloop's mast, longer than that required for a junk rig, would be ideal. Sadly, a junk's mast, being free-standing, needs to be of heavy wall thickness and, if aluminum, has to be free of holes. The mast section also has to be



Annie built the upper part of the mast of Douglas fir, top of page. To make the butt of this topmast round to fit tightly into the aluminum bottom part, she built it up with wood and epoxy, at left. She built up a shoulder the same way. Painted her favorite color, the topmast is complete, at right.

more or less circular so stresses will be distributed evenly. I had to create a new mast for my boat.

I investigated new and secondhand lumber, alloy poles of various shapes and sizes, and even fiberglass. When the owner of a neighboring boat presented me with a broken Oregon (that's Kiwi for Douglas fir -Eds.) mast and a large beam of the same lumber nearly 5 feet long, I decided to go for a "hybrid" mast with an alloy base and wooden top. The longest length of 6-inch aluminum tubing I could buy was 19 feet 8 inches. I needed a 31-foot 2-inch mast and the topmast would need a bury of 1 foot 4 inches. I had just about enough wood. (If these measurements seem a bit odd, it's because I've converted them from the metric numbers I used.)

The local boatyard let me use their shed and they cut the old lumber for me. I went over each piece with infinite care because the boatyard owner had made it quite clear that if he damaged his saw blade or planer, I would have to pay for the resharpening or replacement of a tooth. Once it was sawn, we were all impressed with the quality of the wood. I scarfed the shorter lengths of wood together and glued them into two long lengths. I then glued these to the two lengths sawn from the old mast.

The next stage was to pull out the screws, fill the holes, and sand the whole thing down. I then had to shape

A friend with a large ketch helped Annie pull the old mast out of the boat, at right. The unstayed junk mast puts a lot of load on its partners, which must be built strongly and well supported, below.

the mast. Because of the way I had put it together, there was plenty of wood at the top, so I could remove excess weight there to create a pleasing taper. I worked down the mast, planing off more wood as I turned the sharp edges into well-rounded corners, ensuring that there was still adequate thickness of wood to maintain the spar's strength.

I now had a squarebased mast that would have to fit in the round alloy tube. I filled out around the base to create an almost-circular section by fitting pieces of wood roughly to size and filling the gaps with thickened epoxy. Then I sanded the whole butt. I had bought an offcut of alloy tubing of dimensions similar to my mast and used this to ensure a good fit.

I filled screw holes and imperfections in the secondhand lumber and coated the mast with epoxy. The old





wood soaked up plenty. Once it was well coated, I sanded it all down and covered it with a layer of glass and epoxy. This makes a very hard finish that can withstand the sawing back and forth of the batten parrels.

The next stage was to make a shoulder for the topmast, so it could rest securely on the alloy tube. Offcuts created when I scarfed the wood were useful here. This was then planed, filled, sanded, and glassed.

## Low-labor singlehanding

am 55 years old and 5 foot 1, so it's hard to overstate how essential the junk rig is to my ability to sail singlehanded without pushing myself beyond my comfort limit. Perhaps an example of a not-untypical sail will show this.

I left my anchorage one morning at 5:30 to sail 44 miles to another beautiful harbor. The wind was very light and I hoisted full sail. Once out of the harbor, I had to pass around an imposing headland, and in its lee the wind was very gusty. Some of the gusts were quite strong, so I dropped a reef. A couple of miles farther on, the wind settled down and I shook out the reef. About an hour later, I could see showers building. The first was preceded by a strong gust that had me dropping a couple of reefs. A little later, an even stronger squall hit and I dropped a further two reefs, but 10 minutes after that, the wind had eased and I shook one out. (To save the arithmetic, I now had 3 reefs in the sail!) I carried on like this for a couple of hours and, as I passed about the halfway point, the wind eased again and I shook out two of the reefs.

Half an hour later, we were under full sail but, 5 minutes after that, another squall pounced on us and back in went the reef. We stayed this way until the end of the day. We sailed the final 7 miles close-hauled while pointing as high as possible in about 15 knots of wind. Finally, we arrived at our destination and turned a corner to run toward the little nook I'd chosen. To reduce speed, I gradually dropped the reefs, sailing in and rounding up under just the top panel.

To have done all this with a Bermudan rig would have been exhausting. To have been in the same situation while never having too much or too little canvas set for more than a short while would have been impossible.



I ran a couple of wires up the mast — one for a tricolor light and one for an all-round steaming light — and painted the mast with pigmented epoxy, slightly thickened with silica, as an undercoat. Instead of making a masthead fitting, I glued some large hex-head bolts into the top, head down (I had left extra wood for this) and a large eyebolt for the halvard. I screwed stainless-steel eyes onto the bolts. (This caused a certain amount of toothsucking among various parties, with dire warnings about fatigue because the eyes are not meant to be used in this way. But they're very big!) Finally, I used the eves to suspend the mast while I painted it my favorite shade of turquoise, the color I later used on my boat when I repainted her.

## Out with the old

While waiting for glue to dry, I prepared for the

removal of the old rig. New Zealand yacht clubs and marinas rarely have their own mast cranes, so masts are left in boats for decades, apparently without problems. The usual plan should have been to hire a crane, but this was going to cost several hundred dollars. Instead, I consulted with my friend Dick, who knows how to use low

cunning instead of raw power. We brought my boat alongside his *Irene* a large gaff ketch — and used her gear for pulling my mast.

Now I had to reinforce the deck, make a large hole in it, and fit substantial partners to take the side load from the mast. As the mast is a cantilever, the greatest loads are taken at the partners. I also needed to fit a mast step at the correct angle and distance from the bunk bulkhead to give the mast a forward rake of 6 degrees.

Had I made the mast step and partners out of

wood, I would have ended up with very large structures, so I bit the bullet and asked a local metalworker to make them of stainless steel. Galvanized mild steel would have been as good, but there were local issues making that option just as expensive. So with plywood on deck, a hefty piece of mahogany below, and plenty of thickened epoxy, I fitted the partners.

I now had to line up the step. I dithered and measured and worried and fretted. Finally, I got the alloy part of the mast, stepped it through the partners, and marked as well as I could where the step should go. The mast seemed to have an excessive forward rake, but I took photos and measured the angle and it seemed to be about 6 degrees. With help, I got the heavy tube out again and started another round of fretting and worrying as the marks I'd made didn't match up with my earlier measurements.

I finally forced myself to bolt the step down. This was tricky because a previous owner had added some trimming ballast just where I wanted to fit my step and these random-shaped pieces of lead were very firmly secured with Sikaflex. Eventually, I filled in the gaps with huge amounts of epoxy until I had a solid layer into which to set bolts. Using the Gougeon method, I drilled oversized holes and set greased bolts into these, held in place by the step itself (also greased). When the glue had set, I backed out the bolts and cleaned up the step. Then I spread Simson's Marine Glue, stuck the step down, and replaced the bolts.

## **Stepping the new**

This done, I brought the topmast out of the shed and spread Simson's glue over the butt. Using pieces of copper tubing as rollers, I moved it into the alloy base, which I had wedged securely on the pontoon. I had to get the mast into the boat quickly to avoid upsetting the marina management. I roped in several

While a boat alongside took the weight on a halyard, Annie and her helpers coaxed the new mast through the partners, top of page. In a marina populated largely with Bermudan-rigged boats, the junk sail stood out, at left. *Fantail* spreads her wing and shows her new livery on Pelorus Sound, facing page.



strong and willing friends. One moved his boat alongside mine, and we used his main halyard to get things started.

As his boat is smaller than Dick's *Irene*, we needed far more brute force and bad language, but at last we had the heel of the mast over the hole and quickly slacked away a little on the halyard. More pushing and pulling on deck and then we went below to haul the heel back. Once it was past the half bulkhead, it gave up the fight and, as it was slowly lowered, moved gradually down and into its step ... to my profound astonishment. Rejoicing, we released all the lines, I tapped in some temporary wedges, and we all stood back to admire The New Mast.

Next was the exciting bit: bending on the sail. A friend came by as I was feeding battens into their pockets and offered to help. He was amused by my refusal and explanation that I was enjoying doing it on my own. I had a lot of fun playing with new rope, knotting, and whipping. There is plenty of string on a junk and my cambered sail required some lines I hadn't used before. The folds had a natural tendency to hang in diagonal creases and it took a bit of time to remove these. But finally I felt all was ready for a trial sail.

On a calm morning in early April, I started the motor, cast off the lines, and chugged out of my marina berth. I turned up the harbor and, with the last of the land breeze, shut off the engine and hoisted sail, ghosting through the marina and its rows of silent boats. Once in the Haven, we headed into the little breeze and the boat took herself to windward quite satisfactorily. We went through the entrance and out into Tasman Bay where the new sea breeze greeted us. As she lifted to the swell coming down from Cook Strait and heeled to the increasing wind, I looked up at the lovely sail, thrilled at what I had created. I tacked and jibed with nothing to do but move the tiller across. I dropped reefs and shook them out again. I felt in control and confident. The great fan rose above me and, like the little bird she is named for, Fantail ducked and swooped over the water.

I felt a profound mixture of relief and contentment ... relief that it all worked, contentment because I was once again sailing with the rig I love so much.  $\varDelta$ 

Annie Hill has lived aboard boats since 1975 and doubled the Atlantic before the age of 21. She has sailed more than 160,000 miles and crossed the Atlantic 17 times. After crossing the Pacific in 2006, she settled in New Zealand in 2009 and bought her 26-foot Fantail. After some time in South Island, she sailed to North Island where she happily lives and sails singlehanded. Annie is a fan of the junk rig and vows never to sail anything else again. Follow her adventures with her "junkie" friends at http://anniehill.blogspot.com.

# Protection in plaid

## Sporty covers for cherished Sport-a-Seats

## BY DON CASEY

I n early 2006, this magazine published a photo of the founding editor taking her morning leisure, her feet up and her body reclined in a way totally foreign to every sailboat I have shipped aboard. The agent of her apparent comfort was a legless, multi-position recliner called a Sport-a-Seat. The accompanying text heaped praise on this must-have sailboat accessory.

It so happened that Olga and I had just sailed up to Puerto Rico from Grenada. This is important because shipping to most of the islands in the Caribbean is complicated and/or expensive, but Puerto Rico is a U.S. territory, which usually means standard shipping from the mainland is available and affordable. Indeed, Sport-a-Seat did (and does) ship to Puerto Rico so, based on such a glowing recommendation, we ordered a pair.

The immediate impact of these seats was such that, right away, we could not imagine ever being without them again. We became protective, stashing them up under the dodger to keep them dry when not in use. Keeping them clean was more of a challenge, particularly as they instantly became our seats of choice for eating alfresco, which more often than not we do thrice a day. The excellent Sunbrella upholstery cleans easily enough, but frequent cleaning surely shortens the life of the fabric, just the opposite of our aim.

In our linen locker we found a pair of new king-sized pillowcases that had come with a sheet set we modified to fit our V-berth. They proved to be a good fit, except they were about four inches too short. Still, they instantly provided 90-percent coverage. They also gave us the model for the longer covers that we determined to sew as soon as we found a suitable fabric.

Our quest was short. We had often admired the colorful madras fabrics in

Martinique, and in a few short weeks we were there. Madras is most often a plaid cotton or cotton and silk fabric used for comfortable clothing, but in Le Marin, Mme. Ozier-Lafontaine offered a generous selection of heavier madras decorator fabrics. We bought enough to make two longer pillow cases with overlapping end-flaps.

In addition to protecting the original upholstery, bright slipcovers provide an attractive contrast to bland cockpit colors. Madras does fade over time, but we found the evolution pleasing. We remove and wash these covers at least once a season. The photo of two seats shows how "new" the protected original Sunbrella fabric has remained, even though these chairs are more than five years old and have seen full-time daily use for around three of those.

## **One-piece slip-on cover**

The project detailed here is the replacement of our five-year-old madras covers with fresh ones. To avoid an under-leg seam at the front, we make the cover from a single piece of fabric that wraps over the bottom end to form both the front and back. It also wraps over the top to form a retaining flap. The decorator fabric we chose came in a 2.8-meter width (a little over 9 feet), making its width about 10 inches longer than the length we needed for the cut size. For narrower fabric, the blank would be cut lengthwise, but if the

Removing the exhausted cover, upper photo, reveals how well it has protected the 5-year-old Sport-a-Seat. The new cover, lower photo, should serve another five years.





Positioning the hems for seaming the sides is confusing, so be sure you have it right before sewing the side seams. Use the diagrams at left for guidance. A straight pattern with a plaid or stripes makes accurate cutting easy, above.

The cut width is 21 inches. The cut length is  $43 + 42 + \frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{2} + 6 + 6 + \frac{1}{2} = 98\frac{1}{2}$  inches

pattern or the economics require it, you can certainly make this cover in two pieces seamed together at the bottom.

A one-piece cover starts as a long narrow rectangle of fabric, rendered dead easy to cut accurately with our plaid pattern. Sew a ½-inch double hem on one end. On the other end sew a 6-inch hem with the raw edge turned under ½ inch. This becomes the overlapping flap end. The double-thickness here helps it hold its shape.

Completing the cover is nothing more than seaming the two sides. Binding these seams is not essential, but it does make the job neater and cuts down on loose threads when removing the covers to wash them. Reverse the finished cover, leaving the flap turned inside out, and slide it over the straight Sport-a-Seat, starting at the bottom. When the seat is fully inside the cover, reverse the flap to lock the cover in place.

These covers encase the seat's carrying straps, which we never use. If you want a carrying strap, it would be easy enough to fabricate one and capture its ends in one of the cover's side seams.

Our finished covers turned out slightly tighter than planned because the fabric seller was less generous than I had anticipated with the cut length. The measurements I provided here create a slightly looser cover, a feature you'll appreciate when installing and removing it. You can also alter the measurements to make this cover fit a different folding seat, but judging by the alternative seats I have seen, the better course is to not prolong their brief lives but to save your money to buy the real deal. It is not possible to overstate the improvement in comfort, at anchor and under way, that our two Sport-a-Seats have provided. Our other cockpit cushions are now just in the way — except when we have guests aboard. Our solution to that has to wait until we sail again up to  $18^{\circ}$  N.  $\varDelta$ 

Don Casey became the authority on boat fix-it projects with This Old Boat and is the author of several other books about maintaining, repairing, and restoring good old boats. He and his wife, Olga, have been cruising aboard their 1969 Allied Seawind since 2002.

Resources Sport-a-Seat www.sportaseat.com



A wide hem doubles the thickness of the overlap to stiffen it, at left. The overlap should be at the top of the seat back on the back side, at right.

# Swim step and ladder

Safer egress from dinghy and water

**BY WALTER GAINES** 



few years ago, we had friends out on our O'Day 32 Center Cockpit for a lovely warm summer daysail off San Diego's Point Loma. The Pacific waters are cold most of the year and rarely warm up enough for swimming. My friend Paul asked if I had a boarding ladder, and I scrounged around for the old stainless-steel one I had hiding in a locker. We hung it off the starboard toerail and said, "It'll do." Paul strapped a line to the stern cleat and jumped in for a 5-knot tow while we were under sail. Eventually, the chill got to him and he waved for me to head the boat into the wind and stop her so he could climb aboard. Paul is a rather large man, upward of 250 pounds, very fit and healthy. We dangled in irons while he tried to board. After a considerable struggle, he was able to. Paul's not a kid anymore, but the challenge he

faced climbing back to safety caught us all off guard.

The lesson we learned that warm summer day was that our boat was ill-equipped for a man-overboard event. It surprised me that I hadn't yet considered this scenario. I gave serious thought to what I could do to make the boat safer and more functional while also providing an easier pathway into and out of the water. We wanted to sail primarily to nearby gunkholing areas where we could anchor, a challenging proposition along California's rocky coastline.

We needed a swim step to allow folks overboard to reboard and as a means of disembarking more easily for dinghy trips to shore. We thought a small aft-facing platform with no sharp edges and a retractable boarding ladder would expand our sailing horizons, making it possible to anchor, swim, stand, clean, and otherwise service aft regions of the boat.

## **Proportions and patterns**

(What a) Day!

The first step toward that objective was to back the boat into the slip for measuring. We brought her in close so we could sit on the dock and get a feel for what we wanted. Using a large piece of cardboard for a pattern, we were able to trace the curvature of the transom and transfer that curvature to the shape of the small platform. We realized that we didn't want the swim step to pose an obstacle to docking, so we made it narrower than the transom and tapered the shape. We could also see that it could not be allowed to stick out so far as to create a problem with maneuvering in tight spaces. Finally, we wanted a quality installation that was strong and cleanlooking. When completed, it should look as if it had been manufactured and fitted as original equipment.

After the cardboard pattern was completed, we picked up a small piece

The platform Walter added to O' (what a) Day! fits closely to the transom, top right, and is supported by stainless-steel brackets, top left. A swimmer can reach the ladder. of Masonite board and transferred the pattern to it from the cardboard. Using a carpet blade, we cut the Masonite to size and ground and smoothed all the corners to create a perfect template for the material we would ultimately use for the swim step — StarBoard, a heavy and workable UV-resistant white plastic that's available in sheets and with a non-skid surface. StarBoard is used for stern-rail seats and other applications that require a simple plane of durable material.

We bought a 2-foot x 4-foot, 1-inchthick sheet of it from the local plastics distributor. I was surprised at how heavy a sheet this size was. We taped the Masonite to the StarBoard and used a Sharpie to trace the outline. (The Sharpie marks can be erased with isopropyl alcohol, if necessary, but they would be removed in the later cutting process.)

The next step was to have the StarBoard cut to the marked outline. This was handled by a friend with a good-quality jigsaw. The StarBoard cuts very easily and is very forgiving. After cutting was complete, we beveled the sharp edges with a router and curved bit. The challenge when cutting StarBoard is its tendency to melt. It's important to apply pressure carefully when cutting or routing to avoid generating heat that melts the plastic.

We returned to the marina with the completed swim step and test-fitted it to the transom by holding it in place. StarBoard does *not* float, so we were *very* careful when handling it over water.

#### A sturdy installation

We now had to consider how to attach the platform to the vertical transom. We agreed to over-engineer this component by using large 90-degree brackets on either side of the centerline and two smaller brackets farther out.



The Marinco 90-degree brackets fit the bill perfectly. Attaching the brackets with proper stainless-steel nuts and bolts would make the structure strong enough to endure almost any situation at sea or in port.

The timing of the swim step installation coincided with haulout at the local boatyard. Adding the swim step was the fun work for the haulout, the rest being the less pleasant tasks of painting the bottom and replacing through-hulls.

It was important for us to get the height off the water right — high enough to allow the dinghy to clear the step, but not so high that a swimmer could not reach it. We measured carefully and drew a horizontal line across the transom. We then drilled for the brackets and mounted them.

To create a strong bond between the bracket and the transom, we used small square plates of %-inch StarBoard inside the transom as backing plates for each bracket. We sealed these in place with white marine silicone sealant and ratcheted the brackets to the transom until sealant squeezed out around the edges. The combination of sealant and StarBoard backing plates created a firm structural bond that allowed the bracket to become one with the hull and prevent seepage later on. This was



Walter made a pattern and traced the shape of the step onto the StarBoard from which he made the step, at left. The pattern was also useful when positioning the four support brackets, at right. Inside the transom, he used StarBoard backing plates to provide extra support, at top.



The swim platform is smooth underfoot and the ladder allows swimmers to exit the water.

an important consideration because the brackets were so close to the waterline.

The next step was to place the StarBoard step atop the transommounted brackets and get a feel for how snug it should be against the transom. We decided a <sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub>-inch space would allow water and other materials to clear the surface. We didn't want organic material to be able to accumulate in the corner and stain the platform and the transom.

## A ladder for boarding

The final piece of the swim step was a proper ladder We wanted the type that fits beneath the platform rather than on top of it so people could sit comfortably on the swim step or walk on it barefoot without stubbing toes. The Garelick "Out of Sight Under

## Resources

#### **King Plastic**

www.kingplastic.com Manufacturers of StarBoard Purchased at San Diego Plastics, Inc.

#### Marinco

www.marinco.com Swim platform mounting bracket. Look under marine/AFI/boarding systems

## Garelick

www.garelick.com Out-Of-Sight-Under-Platform-Telescoping-Ladder Ladder Model # 19622 Platform Telescoping Ladder" was the perfect solution. It's not so bulky that it gets in the way and a swimmer can safely grab it from the stowed position, drop it into the water, and climb aboard. I was very lucky when one came up on eBay and I got it for a song.

The mounting nuts and bolts for all connecting points had to be well thought out and measured. We used acorn nuts under the swim step so no sharp threads could damage the inflatable dinghy or create a hazard for swimmers. We drove flathead bolts through the top of the step so we would barely feel them underfoot.

With her new swim platform and ladder, O' (*what a*) *Day*! feels like a whole new boat to us, and better suits our boating lifestyle. It is now easier for us to get to and from the boat when we're away from the slip, we feel safer with our step and ladder in place, and we enjoy the added versatility of boarding and departing in the dinghy.  $\varDelta$ 

Walter Gaines is a lifelong sailor. Originally from Lakeland, Florida, he lives in Desert Hot Springs, California, and works in the field of automotive safety cameras. He divides his spare time between restoring O' (what a) Day!, an O'Day 32 Center Cockpit, and sailing her on San Diego Bay.



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# Instant cushions

## Contact cement is the key to speed

BY HENRY RODRIGUEZ

y bottom was in trouble, and I don't mean my boat's bottom. The daggerboard trunk on our 8-foot El Toro dinghy was doing its best to work its way into places that are better left unmentioned. The dinghy's thwart is very narrow and the daggerboard trunk that connects to it (and supports the "overflow" of my ample and tender behind) is even narrower. I wound up with a major wedgie every time I took to the oars. Something had to be done.

I fabricated a small rowing seat out of two pieces of ½-inch plywood. IS Contraction of the second sec

Henry glued Sunbrella over closed-cell foam to make a cushion for his dinghy's seat

I cut the seat surface in the shape of a truncated triangle about 10 inches long by 8 inches wide and attached a vertical fin to the bottom of the seat with screws and epoxy. The fin drops into the daggerboard slot and holds the seat in place.

No more wedgies! The seat was wide enough and relatively comfortable but in need of cushioning. I had some 1-inch closed-cell foam on hand for a cockpitcushion project. I cut off a small piece for the dinghy seat and attached it to the seat surface with 3M Dual Lock tape, an industrial hook-and-loop



material. I could have glued it with contact cement, but I had a roll of the Dual Lock on hand and liked the idea of making the cushion removable.

The seat worked well with the little cushion, but raw foam should be covered. I had some Sunbrella fabric I scored at a great price a few years ago on eBay. I had already used it to replace three sail covers and to make a pop-top enclosure for *Chiquita*, our Venture of Newport, but I still had more than enough for the cockpit cushions and dinghy seat.

## Glued, not sewn

I cut out a piece of the Sunbrella fabric about 2 inches bigger than the outline of the seat surface. I laid the Sunbrella flat on my living room floor (on top of newspaper layers to protect the wood floor) and used a disposable chip brush to paint a thick coat of liquid contact cement on the entire inside surface of the Sunbrella as well as the whole top and sides of the cushion. I also painted the glue on the bottom of the foam in a 1½-inch swath around the perimeter. Then I waited about 20 minutes for the glue to dry.

There's a trick to contact cement. After both surfaces have been coated, they should be allowed to dry to the touch. That is counterintuitive: how can the glue hold if it's dry and doesn't feel sticky? But two surfaces coated with this glue and left to dry will bond instantly and tenaciously on contact. It's usually a good idea to cut Sunbrella fabric with a hot knife to keep the edges from unraveling, but that was not really necessary for this project. The contact cement does an excellent job of keeping the edges from fraying.

Once the surfaces

were dry, I made sure the Sunbrella was spread out perfectly flat (glue side up, of course). I then carefully laid the foam cushion in place. The canvas instantly bonded to the foam. I wrapped the excess neatly around the edges and bottom of the foam. Because the cushion was slightly rounded, I had to fold some small pleats in the fabric on the underside of the cushion to accommodate the curves. I added some glue to the pleats and folded them over to stick to the bottom out of sight. I could just as easily have cut small wedges, or darts, out of the fabric on the bottom and glued the remainder down.

I was astounded at the results! The surface of the cushion was perfectly flat,



not a wrinkle anywhere. It looks great on the dinghy and rowing out to our boat at the mooring is no longer the excruciating ordeal it had become.

## **Thinking bigger**

I was admiring my handiwork after an afternoon excursion when I got to thinking I could use the same upholstery technique on larger projects ... that unfinished pair of cockpit cushions, for example!

I had wanted cockpit cushions for a long time, but kept putting off making them. I had accumulated the fabric, the foam, and the thread. I had even made cardboard patterns of the cockpit seats and cut the foam to shape with an electric carving knife. And there the project stalled.

I just couldn't bring myself to start the upholstery. I was intimidated by the seeming complexity of getting the Sunbrella cover to be a good fit around the foam.

I'm no stranger to the sewing machine. I broke down and bought a Sailrite machine a few years ago. I've made three

sets of sailcovers for *Chiquita*'s jib, staysail, and main over the 36 years she has owned me. I've also made two complete pop-top enclosures, one cockpit enclosure, and numerous bags, covers, and so on. But I had developed a mental block about the cushions. Even after I bought the Sailrite instructional DVD about making cushions, I still lacked confidence. So I was very eager to see if my newly discovered "contact-cement method" of upholstery could produce a serviceable and decent set of cockpit cushions.

I'm happy to say they turned out even better than I had hoped, and every bit as good as the dinghy seat. I followed the same procedure and got





the same results. The closed-cell foam I used is only 1 inch thick, so it's not particularly comfortable for sleeping on. It's even a little bit hard for long periods of sitting. But it is better than bare fiberglass seats. I chose closed-cell foam because it's weatherproof, can be left out in all conditions, doesn't have to dry, floats if it is blown overboard (which it has never done), and the kids can use the cushions as floats when swimming. I also wanted the cushions to be fairly hard so they would not "squish" and cause me to lose my footing when I jump from cabintop to cockpit seat, something I have to do after I release the mooring pendant from the bow every time I go out singlehanded.

#### **Multiple Sunbrella projects**

I've used the cushions for two seasons and they still look brand-new. I'm tempted to add another softer layer of foam to the cushions this winter. I've learned that gluing the fabric directly to the foam keeps it from shifting when stepped or jumped on. I'll laminate a layer of softer ½-inch foam (from a pair of \$10 sleeping pads for campers) directly to the tops of the existing cushions with contact cement. I plan to glue them right over the existing Sunbrella without removing it.

This contact-cement method for making almost-instant cushions is ideal for use on closed-cell foam and for outdoor projects. I even made a pair of J-shaped backrests that slip over the cockpit coamings. Then I used contact cement, Sunbrella, and several foam pool noodles to make a very effective soft rubrail/bumper that goes entirely around the dinghy. I want to make new cabin cushions as well, but I'm not sure this method will work with open-cell foam or with an interior fabric that's much more porous than the outdoor Sunbrella. I'll try using several coats of 3M spray adhesive rather than the liquid contact cement. It's a worthy experiment.

It looks like I've got some projects lined up for the coming winter!  $\varDelta$ 

Henry Rodriguez sails Chiquita, his 1974 23-foot Venture of Newport cutter on Minnesota's Lake Minnetonka. He has been her caretaker for more than 35 years and has repaired, replaced, or modified just about every part of her. Chiquita has taken Henry, Marie, and their two girls (now in their thirties) on adventures on both Lake Superior and Lake Michigan. Henry and Marie are now raising three grandchildren and were thrilled to take them, with Chiquita, to the Havasu Pocket Cruisers Convention in Arizona in February 2013.



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# Hatch patch

## Modifying an anchor-locker lid

BY GRAHAM COLLINS

ur C&C 35, *Secret Plans*, came with a navel pipe on the anchorlocker lid for the anchor rode to pass through. It was also excellent for smashing toes on. Since we were installing an anchor windlass in the locker, we needed a smooth run of chain into the locker and wanted to remove the original navel pipe and patch over the hole.

To get started, I made a male mold of what I wanted the new curved pipe at the forward edge of the hatch to look like. It had to accommodate <sup>5</sup>/<sub>10</sub>-inch chain. I found a curved plumbing fitting of appropriate diameter and cut it to the shape I wanted. Then I applied Play-Doh to provide filleted edges. I "borrowed" the Play-Doh from my son's collection, but didn't think he'd miss the pink stuff! After covering this with Saran Wrap, I applied four layers of 6-ounce fiberglass wetted with epoxy. After the epoxy cured, I pried free the resulting female mold.

The next step was the messy one. I marked the forward edge of the hatch with the outline of the new cutout and cut this out with a jigsaw. I then used an angle grinder and 40-grit sanding disk to



cut the taper on the skins. For a ¼-inchthick skin, a taper of at least 1½ inches is required to meet the recommended minimum taper of 12:1. I also used a random-orbit sander to remove gelcoat on the top surface of the hatch around the new cutout area so I could apply some glass on that side and fair it in.

Around the cutout where the old fitting had been, the core was soaked and rotten. I cut back the inside skin until I found solid core. To make finishing the outside easier, I tapered the top and bottom skins from the inside.

## Laying up

With the female mold waxed and taped in place and the hatch upside down, I applied the first few layers of glass and epoxy to the new navel pipe. Once that set up, I was able to remove the mold. I then applied many more layers of epoxy and glass to build up the thickness to about <sup>3</sup>/<sub>16</sub> inch, tapered to match the taper in the cutout. Flipping the



When Graham fitted an under-deck windlass, he modified the hatch, top of page. The toe-busting navel pipe, at left, had to go. He made a male mold for the new pipe, above, and took a female mold off it, at right, that he laid glass into after cutting a hole in the hatch.

hatch over, I cleaned the new material thoroughly to remove any residual wax from the mold and applied a few layers of glass to ensure a good bond.

To patch the old hole, I laid the upside-down hatch on a piece of ¼-inch plywood with a layer of plastic between them. Clamping the plywood to the hatch gave me a smooth solid surface to lay the glass against when I applied the layers required to repair the top fiberglass skin. I cut new balsa core to replace the wet core I had removed and epoxied it in place. I then covered this with the replacement bottom-side glass and epoxy.

I was worried that cutting out a big section of the hatch edge would make the hatch flexible, so I also glassed a stiffening rib to the underside of the hatch. This piece runs from one side to the other, stopping short of the edges to allow it to fit properly in the deck cutout. The stiffener consists of five layers of glass laid over a piece of %-inch balsa set on edge.

## Fairing and finishing

Once all the glasswork was done, I used fairing compound and epoxy to fair the



## The last step, applying KiwiGrip non-skid material, was by far the easiest.

repairs and modifications. I quickly learned that, as with drywall, the key is to not add too much compound in one go. Once things were faired acceptably, I covered the fairing compound with a coat of epoxy to seal it and, when that had cured, gave it a final sanding.

I painted the entire hatch with Interlux Primekote, followed by Perfection topcoat, using foam brushes and doing the painting outdoors. The two-part paints are amazing, but they are also very nasty smelling and working outdoors was the only option. The representatives at Interlux aren't kidding about humidity being an issue during cure; one night it was foggy and the humidity caused the paint to crinkle. I had to sand it smooth and redo it. I did not worry too much about the quality of the paint job anywhere except on the edges that would be visible on the finished hatch.

The last step, applying KiwiGrip non-skid material, was by far the easiest. I masked off the edges of the hatch, slathered on the KiwiGrip, and rolled it out with the special roller. As this stuff is not nasty smelling, I could apply it indoors.

The modified hatch has been in use for two years and still looks new.  $\mathcal{A}$ 

Graham Collins is an obsessive boat modifier, a woodworker, and a manufacturing engineer of military electronics. He sails Secret Plans, a C&C 35-3, on the waters around Halifax, Nova Scotia, with son Sam and wife, Jill.

## **Resources**

Interlux: www.yachtpaint.com

KiwiGrip: http://kiwigrip.com









The new chain pipe is laid up but not yet trimmed, at top, and is tabbed and faired, second from top. Graham added a stiffener, third from top, in case cutting the chain hole weakened the lid. Painted, the hatch awaits KiwGrip non-skid, above.



## A suspense novel written for sailors by sailor/author, Tom Wells.

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## About the Author

Author Tom Wells is an engineer, a longtime sailor, and a Contributing Editor and boat reviewer for *Good Old Boat* magazine.

He has a sequel in the works, featuring Paul Findlay and his sailboat in another nautical setting.

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An imaginative plot and excellent narrative pull the reader in. — John, RI

Superior Run is a true sailor's novel. — Karen, OR

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# The Islander 36

An innovative design that's fast and fun

## BY TOM WELLS

in 2009. In May 2013, Jack and Anneke welcomed my wife, Sandy, and me aboard *Trillium* in her homeport of Muskegon, Michigan, for this review.

## History

The history of Islander Yachts can be traced to Joe McGlasson, who began building small fiberglass craft in the early 1960s. Due to high demand for his popular 24-footer, his fledgling McGlasson Sailboat Company partnered with Glas Laminates, the precursor to Columbia Yachts, to produce a version of the boat.

McGlasson later withdrew from the partnership and produced the Islander 32, a boat of his own design. His company was incorporated as Wayfarer Yacht Corporation in 1963 and shortly thereafter it was sold to new investors. Joe McGlasson moved on to Newport, Oregon, to build boats under the Cape Foulweather name.

Cosmodyne, Inc., acquired Wayfarer in 1968 and within three years it was sold to Radlon, Inc. Islander boats ranging from the Islander 24 up to the fairly rare Islander 55 were produced at the Costa Mesa, California, facility under the name Islander Yachts. Some models were even offered in kit form for finishing by buyers.

The Islander 36 proved to be one of the company's most successful models. Production began in Costa Mesa, California, in 1971 and a reported 770 hulls were built over the 15 years that followed. This period was a turbulent time in the industry. While the lines of the boat remained constant, construction materials and methods varied due to material shortages and other factors. The company reportedly shifted production from Costa Mesa to Irvine, California, and then, in 1984, to Costa Rica. Islander Yachts closed its doors in 1986.

Jack and Anneke Wolf sail their Islander 36, *Trillium*, on Muskegon Lake, Michigan. The sleek lines of this 40-yearold design have lost none of their appeal.

J ack Wolf caught the sailing bug at the age of 18 aboard a friend's 32-foot Columbia Sabre. He later owned and sailed trailerable boats, including an O'Day 22 and a Kells 23 that he sailed on Lake Michigan and out of Jacksonville, Florida. When he was sent to Europe in 1976, he could not have imagined how much that move would enrich his life. He worked in the Netherlands for five years, and there he met Anneke, whom he soon married. They began their lifelong sailing

partnership aboard a 27-foot Dutchmade Defender sloop on the IJsselmeer. Jack and Anneke were transferred to England and for the next 14 years they sailed with friends on the south coast and the North Sea.

In 1996, Jack, Anneke, and their son Mark moved from Europe to Grand Rapids, Michigan. Sailing was a deeply ingrained way of life for the family. The culmination of their sailing dream came when they purchased their 1976 Islander 36, *Trillium*,

#### Design

Alan Gurney, a gifted British naval architect, designed the Islander 36. He was better known for his work on custom designs, such as his famous *Windward Passage, Guinevere,* and *Kittiwake*. He much preferred performance-oriented boats and, while cruising was often a consideration, his designs were always quick and seaworthy.

He made a brief foray into the world of production sailboat design in the early 1970s. He drew the lines for the Carib 41 and the Whitney 41, but only a few were built. His greatest production successes were the O'Day 27 and the Islander 36. He also drew a 41-footer for Islander, but only six were built.

Alan grew increasingly frustrated with the demands of custom design and the changing preferences of clients and he left the yacht design world to pursue a second career exploring the Antarctic and Arctic regions. He wrote two books on his travels and a third book, *Compass*, chronicling the history of that essential instrument. He died in 2012 at his home in England.

The Islander 36 is also notable for its coordinated interior and exterior styling. Joe Artese, an industrial designer and ocean racer, developed many innovative features that first appeared on the Islander 36. From coachroof and cockpit design to comfort and convenience amenities below, the boat carries his mark. His Joseph Artese Design studio is still active and he graciously provided his original design notes on the Islander 36 for use in this review.

#### Construction

Islander 36 hulls were built using a solid fiberglass layup. Tumblehome in the hull necessitated the hull mold be in two halves that could be separated to release the finished hull. The joint was bonded with fiberglass, and the gelcoat over this area is prone to minor cracking. Some hulls seem more likely than others to develop blisters. This may be due to variations in layup procedures over the years.

Four transverse stiffening ribs that were glassed into the bilge also support the mast step. Liners were also used and some of the earlier boats had a textured fiberglass sole. Later boats were fitted with teak-and-holly soles.

The deck was laid up over a ½-inch plywood core that tapered toward the rail so the layup was solid glass where the deck mated to an inward-turning flange on the hull. The joint was sealed with bedding compound — reportedly Dolfinite — and fastened with throughbolts on 4-inch centers through the extruded aluminum toerail. This joint between the smooth hull flange and the rough underside of the deck was prone to leaks if the bedding compound had not been applied consistently.

The standard keel is a deep fin with a swept-back leading edge and a nearly vertical trailing edge. It is a lead casting and is bolted to the hull. A shoal-draft keel was also available. Some of the boats were fitted with cast-iron keels rather than lead, reportedly due to material shortages. The iron keels can exhibit corrosion, especially when a boat is hauled for an extended period. The skeg-mounted rudder has a stainless-steel stock and is supported on a bronze bearing at the base of the skeg.

Bulkheads are tabbed to the hull but not the deck, and owners report that this is a potential maintenance issue, especially on older boats.

#### Rig

The Islander 36 has a painted, keelstepped aluminum mast with double spreaders. The upper and intermediate





The foredeck is relatively uncluttered, at left, with cleats, anchor roller, and navigation lights all mounted on a teak coaming. The T-shaped cockpit, at right, provides spacious seating, though the seats aren't long enough to sleep on. The forward bulkhead is angled to make a comfortable backrest. A fillet where the cockpit footwell side meets the sole, upper right, provides level footing even when the boat is heeled.



A storage box forward of the port guarter berth doubles as a nav station, at left. The saloon is open and airy, at right. Joe Artese's use of curved features on furniture and trim is regarded as a breakthrough in sailboat interior design, as is his multi-position fold-away table.

shrouds terminate at a chainplate bolted to a bulkhead at the forward end of the saloon. Forward lower shrouds are attached to a bulkhead-mounted chainplate and aft lowers terminate at a deck-mounted plate. The aft-lower chainplates on some boats have been modified to include a rod to carry rig loads to an added stringer glassed to the hull. A single backstay was standard, but many of the boats were fitted with split backstays.

Mast steps are aluminum. With age and saltwater corrosion, many have deteriorated and some mast butts have fused with their steps. Rebuilding the mast step is a common repair and various materials from oak to rigid polyurethane have been used to fabricate new steps. Refinishing the painted masts is another common activity.

As is common in boats designed under the IOR, the sail plan uses large headsails and a relatively small mainsail. As a result, the boom extends only a short distance over the cockpit. The mainsheet is attached to three points on the boom and to a traveler that spans the companionway sea hood.

Lewmar 45 primary winches are mounted on the coaming just forward of the helm. Smaller secondary winches are mounted farther forward on the coaming and two cabintop winches serve lines led aft. Halyard winches on the mast complete the complement.

## **On deck**

The Islander 36 presents a sleek and racy appearance. Joe Artese designed the cabintop with more slope than usual to the sides and with an oval top section. It's finished off with a teak eyebrow that runs the length of the



Designer	Alan Gurney
LOA:	36 feet 1 inch
LWL:	28 feet 3 inches
Beam:	11 feet 2 inches
Draft:	
standard keel:	6 feet 1inch
shoal keel:	4 feet 9 inches
Displacement:	
standard keel:	13,450 pounds
shoal keel:	13,600 pounds
Ballast:	
standard keel:	5,450 pounds
shoal keel:	5,600 pounds
Sail area:	576 square feet
Disp./LWL ratio:	266
Sail area/disp. ratio:	16.3
Fuel:	32 gallons
Water:	54 gallons
Holding:	6 gallons
	_



sides. Teak grabrails along the outer top surfaces provide good security going forward and convenient toe stops for crew working at the mast. Trillium has a fiberglass hatch contoured to match the forward coachroof profile, but later boats were fitted with a smoked-acrylic forward hatch and an additional hatch over the saloon. There are no ventilators on the coachroof other than the hatches.

There is no anchor locker on the clean and open foredeck, but a navel pipe directs the anchor chain and rode to a locker aft of the stem. *Trillium* has a single anchor roller and a chain stop to secure the anchor in place.

The cockpit shows several of the innovative touches Joe Artese added to the boat. He sculpted the aft end of the cabin trunk to an angled and curved shape that makes an excellent backrest. The sweeping line from cabin trunk to coaming adds to the boat's distinctive appearance. One of the more noticeable improvements is his "heelwalk," a curved fillet at the junction of the cockpit sole and seat front that provides comfortable footing even when the boat is heeled.

The steering wheel is mounted on a standard Edson pedestal. The seats are in a T-configuration that assures good access around the helm, but with the traveler mounted over the coachroof, singlehanding the boat is more difficult. There are sizable cockpit lockers under the starboard and aft seats and convenient coaming cubbies on each side for winch handles, gloves, and other small items. The cockpit seats are just over 4 feet 6 inches long - not long enough to stretch out on.

The companionway does not have a bridge deck and the cockpit drains



The L-shaped galley, at left, is of simple and practical design and large enough for a gimbaled stove/oven, icebox, sink, and some counter space. With the filler in place, the V-berth, at right, converts to a generous double. Shelves molded into the liner are trimmed with teak fiddles.

are fairly small. Dropboards should be left in place in any conditions where boarding seas might occur.

## **Belowdecks**

Stepping below on an Islander 36 is an experience unlike that on most other boats of this size. Joe Artese fitted the boat with actual stairs rather than a traditional companionway ladder, and as you walk easily down you enter a saloon that is open and airy. Handsome teak surrounds the entry and provides good handholds, and the interior teak has angled and curved features that distinguish it from the more traditional look of the furniture in many boats built in the '70s. Two large fixed portlights allow a good amount of light into the saloon. Forward of them, three opening ports on each side provide decent ventilation. The fixed ports were made larger in later models.

The V-berth is 6 feet 8 inches long and more than 6 feet wide at the head. With the insert in place it makes a comfortable berth for two. A louvered door at the forward end provides access to the anchor-rode locker. The fiberglass hull liner forms the sides, and there are molded-in storage shelves trimmed with teak.

Located aft of the V-berth and to port, the head compartment is small

but serviceable. The marine toilet is mounted on a fiberglass platform and a vanity with a round sink abuts the compartment's aft bulkhead. Teak cabinets provide ample storage behind louvered doors.

The saloon is the focal point of the interior. The settees along both sides have different configurations and the combination of curved and angled teak surfaces breaks up the usual boxy feel of a boat cabin. Shelving along both sides provides good storage. Joe designed the table to fold neatly out of the way when not in use. It can be used in a half-deployed or fully deployed position depending on need.

## **Comments from owners of the Islander 36**

"One of the reasons we chose the Islander is because it was the most accessible boat we have ever sailed for Dan, who uses a wheelchair. But we also love the way this boat sails."

> -Ginny and Dan Charles, Port Superior, Wisconsin

"It loves a good 12+ knots of wind to get going. With a shoal-draft keel it can handle seas of 5 to 8 feet easily. It can be easily handled by one or two people. The boat is very well balanced. We regularly hit from 6 to 9 knots in 15 to 20 knots of wind. We have a 135 percent genoa, which takes a lot of muscle to winch in, and we are contemplating switching to electric winches. A big plus is the ability to stand at the helm and see through the dodger. The biggest flaw is the lack of handholds below, so heading below while under way can be challenging. We did remove the folding door to the V-berth as you couldn't open or close it with the filler inserted."

-Parsons Clark,

Padanaram, Massachusetts

- "I like some aspects but not others. I don't like . . .
- Electrical panel was located with back to engine compartment; too much heat and not big enough to expand.
- Original battery location couldn't be expanded.
- · Forward hatch was not watertight.
- Inadequate tabbing; much has been replaced.
- My wife and other guests love the improved access of a large companionway, but I can envision a boarding sea having improved access too.
  I like . . .
- The way it sails.
- Deep keel is initially stiff and wants to stay upright.

- Skeg-hung rudder tracks well.
- Keel-stepped mast.
- Solid fiberglass hull.
- The fact that I could afford it."

-David Herring, Superior, Wisconsin

"Access to the hull is difficult. The deck is free-floating. There is no connection from the liner or hull to the deck except at the gunwales. Even the mast is free-floating at the partners, which makes mast bend sort of iffy. So there's flex to the boat, taken up mostly by the toerail, a tension rod aft of the mast and, in late models, a compression post near the galley. I've string-tested my boat and there's about 1 inch of banana measured from 0 psi to 3,500 psi backstay tension; that's a fairly stiff hull fore and aft. Not so much side to side."

-Mark Wyatt, San Diego, California



The galley lies to starboard, aft of the settee, and its main features are a three-burner gimbaled stove and adequate counter space along the hull with an icebox and drawers beneath. Just to starboard of the companionway is a single deep stainless-steel sink with storage below it accessible through a louvered door. The insulation around the icebox will likely need to be augmented.

To port and aft of the settee lies another Joe Artese innovation: a large storage box or cabinet located outboard doubles as a nav station and provides shelf storage above with room for the radio and electronics. Aft of this box, a fair-sized quarter berth extends under the port cockpit seat. The main electric panel is mounted on the port side of the stair housing next to the quarter berth, so anyone getting into or out of the berth must be careful not to inadvertently throw switches.

## **Under power**

The original engine installed in the Islander 36 was the gasoline Universal Atomic 4. A few early hulls were fitted with the Palmer P-60, also a gas engine. Diesel engines were used as well, including the Perkins 4-108, Westerbeke L-25, and the Pathfinder, a marinized Volkswagen engine. Some of the later boats were fitted with Yanmar engines. Trillium has been repowered with a Yanmar. Access is fairly good. Removable sections of the stairs allow access to the front and top of the engine. The injector pump and secondary filter, which are located on the side of the engine, can be reached through the starboard cockpit locker.



Instead of a ladder, the companionway has stairs, far left. The engine is behind them. The head, at left, is a molded fiberglass module with adequate storage and a sink. The holding tank for waste is small at 6 gallons.

*Trillium* moves smartly under power from the Yanmar, which is fairly quiet. There is some noticeable port prop walk in reverse, but once the boat has steerageway the big rudder helps to overcome it.

## **Under sail**

On the day of our photo session conditions were a bit blustery, prompting us to stay within Muskegon Lake rather than venture out into Lake Michigan. Jack and Anneke sailed under a partially furled genoa while followed by the chase boat, *Michael J*, a Morgan 41 owned and skippered by Captain Bob Burns.

Sailing *Trillium* is an eye-opener for those who are familiar with traditional cruising boats. Alan Gurney's original design was for a tiller-steered boat. Most of the boats were fitted with a wheel, as is *Trillium*, but helm feedback is good nevertheless. It is easy to imagine how fast a tiller-steered Islander 36 might be with the tall rig, less cruising weight aboard, and hanked-on sails in lieu of roller furling. Even equipped with wheel-steering and outfitted for cruising, the boat is very quick and responsive, and the large skeg-hung rudder and fin keel provide good tracking and stability.

Although the headsail was partially reefed, the boat pointed quite well, not losing much drive even at 35 degrees apparent. The boat is fast on a reach and stable on a run, although some owners report that it can develop an uncomfortable roll on a deeper run in higher seas. We did not experience those conditions in the confines of Muskegon Lake.

The Islander 36 is fun to sail, responsive, and easy to steer. It is

still a popular club racer and, with a base rating of 144 for a standard rig and keel, the boats hold their own in PHRF fleets. For comparison, the much more modern J/35 rates 72, and a Hunter Legend 35 is 135. Some boats were ordered with a tall rig that cuts this rating down by a few seconds and shoal-keel boats like *Trillium* may have a few seconds added.

## Availability and price

An Internet search in late 2013 for boats then on the market found six listed for sale at asking prices ranging from a low of \$18,000 for a 1972 boat to a high of \$39,900 for a 1979 model. The average asking price was just over \$32,500. To be fair, the least costly boat appeared to be the victim of "deferred maintenance."

An Islander 36 will make a capable, enjoyable coastal cruiser for someone who is aware of the age and condition of these boats and willing to make some repairs and improvements.  $\square$ 

Tom Wells is a contributing editor with Good Old Boat (and he has also earned the honorary title of Troubadour through his musical contributions at boat shows). He and his wife, Sandy, have been sailing together since the 1970s and own and sail a 1979 Tartan 37, Higher Porpoise.

## **Resources**

#### Islander 36 Association

Islander 36 owners are justly proud of their boats and they have formed a very strong group. Their website is a treasure trove of information and support. If you can't find the answer there, another owner will likely step in and help you find it: www.islander36.org



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## Stovetop English muffins

The aroma of freshly baking bread fills the saloon and lifts our spirits. As coastal cruisers, we find it necessary and oh, so satisfying, to bake bread aboard our boat, *Sirius*. To make the most of our limited propane, we seldom use the oven, even for bread. Instead, we have devised a method for using a griddle, a vented lid, and a heat diffuser to make delicious English muffins on the stovetop.

## English muffins

Makes 8 muffins 2½ cups flour 1 teaspoon rapid-rise yeast ⅓ cup powdered milk 1 teaspoon salt 1 teaspoon sugar 1 cup hot water (100° to 110°F) Cooking oil (any oil will do; I used olive oil)

Combine 1 cup flour with the yeast, powdered milk, salt, sugar, and hot water. Let this mixture stand until foamy (10 to 15 minutes).

Stir the mixture into: 1½ cups flour 2 glugs of oil (approximately 1 teaspoon per "glug")



Knead until smooth and let rise 30 to 60 minutes. Divide into two balls. With lightly oiled hands, divide one ball into four pieces and form each into a ball. (Set the second half of the dough aside and see below for suggestions on using it.)

Warm the griddle on the heat diffuser until it is warm to the touch. Turn off the heat.

Place the balls of dough about an inch apart on the warmed griddle for rising. Place the lid on the griddle with the vent closed and let the dough rise until doubled, about 30 minutes.

With the griddle removed, preheat the diffuser. Place the griddle, with lid, back on the diffuser. Open the vent to allow steam to escape during baking. Turn the heat to low and bake 10 to 15 minutes until golden brown. Turn, and bake another 6 to 8 minutes until the second side is browned.

Let the muffins cool . . . if you can! Cut each in half and dress with butter and jam or honey.

The second half of the dough may be lightly oiled, put in a plastic bag and kept in the refrigerator to be used even several days later. Or leave it at room temperature overnight and bake it the next day. Leaving the dough for several hours will give the bread a more authentic, dense English-muffin texture with larger holes and extra tang.





MJ (Mary Jeanne) Richards and her husband, Durkee, are never happier than when sailing Sirius, their J/32, in the remote stretches of the magnificent coast of British Columbia and the west coast of Vancouver Island. They carefully conserve resources in order to stretch the time between provisioning stops. Baking bread aboard satisfies the soul and extends resources.

Dough, glorious dough!, top left. The diffuser, top center, assures the griddle heats evenly and the vented lid, top right, when placed over the griddle, retains the heat, making the combination a stovetop oven. The mouthwatering result, at left, speaks volumes for the technique.

## Silent nights

## Hush those tapping halyards

BY TOM STEVENS

A halyard slapping on an aluminum mast is probably the most annoying noise on the water. It's bad enough if it's on someone else's boat, but if yours is the one ruining the ambiance, something must be done! Simply cleating the halyards off tightly to the mast rarely does any good. Pulling them away from the mast with a bungee cord or lanyard works to some extent. However, if your shrouds are not offset forward or aft of the mast, halyards tied off in this manner will most likely chafe against the spreaders.

Soon after I replaced my spinnaker halyard — the outer cover having been abraded by the spreader — I reached the point where something had to give. I searched the Internet for a device to help manage my halyards. I thought there must surely be something designed to hold halyards away from a mast. I came up empty-handed. Although I found some old patents that address the issue, it appears that no one has brought such a product to market.

## **The Halyard Handler**

I decided to design my own device. I needed something to hold my spinnaker halyards and the winch end of my main halyard away from the mast. My thought was to create a rigid "strut" to be mounted on the forward side of the mast to keep the halyards about 15 inches forward of the mast at a point about 7 feet up from the cabintop. While brainstorming in the foredeck area, I decided the spinnaker-pole track on my mast might be the perfect spot to attach such a device.

Having decided on an anchor point, I procured a stainless-steel spinnaker-pole slider, 6 feet of %-inchdiameter stainless-steel rod, and a stainless-steel carabiner and began construction. The carabiner would capture the halyards. It would be attached to the slider with the %-inch rod. One guiding principle was to create a device that

would not snag or disrupt the jib, so smooth curves were the order of the day, and I made sure that any sharp corners and welds were generously rounded.

When I position my Halyard Handler near the very top of my spinnaker-pole track, the angles work out nicely to allow the halyards to be cleated off on the mast and not interfere with the mainsail cover. It is also high enough off the cabintop to clear any but the tallest of heads. I have a 150 percent roller-furling genoa that slides past the halyards without any fuss at all. And best of all, my halyards no longer slap or chafe.



Tom's halyards clip into a carabiner welded into his Halyard Handler.

Tom Stevens is a retired mechanical engineer with a passion for sailboats. He began sailing at age 8 with his father and younger brother in an 8-foot pram. He's progressed since then through a number of vessels and currently enjoys his Tartan 34C. Much of his fascination with the older sailboats is due to the Atomic 4. In 1993, he started Indigo Electronics to provide unique upgrade kits for the engine, and that has become his full-time retirement job.

## Make your own

Tom says he will gladly provide a sketch and parts list to any serious do-it-yourselfer with the ability to TIG weld. He also has plans in the works to develop a marketable product in the near future with a target price of about \$150.

Check Tom's website — www.atomic4.com — from time to time for updates. You can also email him at tom@atomic4.com or phone him at 800-438-8469.



## **Quick and easy**

## **Bird-proof lifelines**

## A friendly deterrent to feathered friends

BY CONNIE MCBRIDE

We recently took a marina vacation — a break from worrying about shifting winds and cold fronts while anchoring out. Since we rarely spend any time at marinas, this was a novel experience. The weather turned a weeklong vacation into a month, giving us an opportunity to meet other boaters, see how the other half lives, and exchange our anchoring woes for marina woes.

One problem we rarely have when anchored out is birds on the boat. The boat's motion, activity on deck, and our two cats generally keep them away. But, at the marina, the deck was more frequently clear for feathered visitors while our cats were locked inside due to their wanderlust and we spent a lot of time socializing. Luckily, others had already solved this problem in a simple way.

Of the dozens of bird-proofing

techniques we have seen on boats, not one has been as easy to install — or uninstall when you want to go sailing — as this one. Birds frequently land on the lifelines, but we learned that monofilament line will deter them. We tied a piece of fishing line the length of the boat from pushpit to pulpit, threading it through the eyes of each stanchion and pulling the line taut. In this position, the monofilament is invisible and will not interfere with sailing the boat. To make it work as a bird deterrent, we placed clothespins along the lifelines to raise the fishing line a few inches above the lifelines. Birds cannot land on the monofilament and are thus unable to sit on our lifelines. When we are ready to go sailing again, we



Monofilament line deters birds when elevated with clothespins but hugs the lifelines for sailing.

remove the clothespins and the fishing line rests invisibly on the lifelines.

For those who must leave their boats unattended for extended periods, this method will help keep your decks clear of the calling cards so frequently left by flying visitors. It takes minutes to install and seconds to get the boat ready to sail again. If only every boating problem were so easy to solve!  $\varDelta$ 

Connie McBride and her husband, Dave, have been cruising for 12 years, most recently cross-country in a van. They are now back on Eurisko and readying her for the next adventure. Keep up with their travels at www.simplysailingonline.com.





## **Quick and easy**





Fire hose makes ideal anti-chafing, at top, and is easily stitched in place with a sailmaker's palm, above.

## Salty-looking anti-chafing

## Fire hose looks the part and takes the wear

## **BY RICHARD SMITH**

I twould be about three hours before the morning tide would turn and take me on a fast-moving flood through Rich Passage on the way to Bremerton, Washington. I could leave now and buck the 3- or 4-knot current, read another few chapters of *The Visible Man*, or make the boat a little better. I opted for the latter.

A fire-fighting sailor friend had given me some surplus fire hose and recommended its use as anti-chafing gear. For years, I'd been using leftover plastic tubing, and it worked pretty well keeping lines from fraying as they ran through chocks and over the rail. But the tubing was stiff, bulky, and clumsy to use, especially with coiled lines. It also looked like leftover plastic. I wanted something a little more "yare."

Every night when at anchor, I moor my wooden dinghy fore-and-aft and about amidships to the mother ship. The lines that hold the fenders between the dinghy and sailboat pass over the edge of the genoa track, where they chafe. So on this warm sunny morning, after pouring another cup of coffee, I got out the ditty bag, found the bottle of needles, waxed twine, and sailmaker's palm, and set about making a pair of fire-hose anti-chafing sleeves.

I doubled the twine, threaded the needle and, with the help of the leather palm, pushed it through the Dacron line before sending it through the fire hose in a series of stitches that ringed the fabric. To make certain the hose stayed in place, I stitched both ends of each sleeve. That went quickly and worked so well I repeated the process on the mooring lines. By the time I'd finished, I could still get in a chapter or two before weighing anchor and heading for the pass.  $\mathcal{A}$ 

*Richard Smith*, a contributing editor with Good Old Boat, is an architect. He specializes in designing and building very small houses and has built, restored, and maintained a wide variety of boats. He and his wife, Beth, sail their Ericson Cruising 31, Kuma, on the reaches of Puget Sound.





#### continued from page 9

## Southwinds website

I read your article in the November 2013 issue on hurricane preparations and thought it was very good. I appreciate you mentioning the *Southwinds* website as a good resource for preparing your boat for a tropical storm. It was during the 2004-05 strong hurricane years that I started researching boat preparation and wrote many articles on the subject along with printing those that were sent in by others. All are available on our website (www.southwindsmagazine.com). I still believe I have the best plan out there on how to prepare your boat. It's titled "A Simple and Effective Boat Preparation Plan for Hurricanes."

It is based on one important principle: The complex better plan is worthless if it isn't carried out. The simple inferior plan is superior if it *is* carried out. Make it so easy and fast to do that you actually do it.

I would like to point out one correction. You printed that *Southwinds* magazine was a "... Gulf Coast regional sailing

Send questions and comments to *Good Old Boat*, 7340 Niagara Lane North, Maple Grove, MN 55311-2655, or by email to jerry@goodoldboat.com.



Patrick Siconolfi sent this photo of his 1978 Hunter 27 sailing under spinnaker. Patrick sails on Lake Ontario in the Thousand Islands and is the original owner of *Genesis II*. Send your highresolution sailboat photos to jstearns@goodoldboat.com and we'll post them on our website. If we publish yours here, we'll send you a Good Old Boat T-shirt or cap.

magazine..." We are a southeastern U.S. regional sailing magazine, covering sailing in the southeast coastal states from North Carolina to Texas. We also cover the Bahamas and, to a limited extent, the Caribbean. Our distribution is in the Southeast U.S. coastal states. The Gulf Coast is just part of the coverage.

-Steve Morrell, Editor, Southwinds Magazine

## **Bay of Quinte Yacht Club**

I must say this letter is full of self-promotion, but here goes. First, thank you for publishing the photo of my baby, *Rub-A-Dub*, a Shark 24, in the January 2014 issue. I love the action in the photo. Second, I would like to add to the story "Scientific Yacht Design" by Rob Mazza in the same issue. The Bay of Quinte Yacht Club was the sponsoring club of the yacht *Atalanta*. BQYC, founded



in 1876, is one of the oldest yacht clubs in North America. We are very proud of our history and continue to be a very active yacht racing club today. The Bay of Quinte boasts some of the finest winds on the Great Lakes, due to the size of the bay and the surrounding land of Prince Edward County. This combination creates thermals and lots of wind. Our club historian, Sue Smith, can better inform you of the storied past of *Atalanta* and BQYC, but I will mention that *Atalanta*'s challenge qualified BQYC to participate in the regatta in Cowes, England, that celebrated the 150th-anniversary of the America's Cup. BQYC members were the only Canadian entry.

Finally, I would like to draw your attention to the burgee on the transom of *Mahseer*, featured in the article "Unhooked and Disoriented." Yes, that is a BQYC burgee! For a small city club of 175 members, we do get around. For more information about BQYC, please visit our website at www.bqyc.org.

Also I look forward to writing to you about the now infamous Katie Gray Race of 2010 in which 42 yachts started and only six finished. I sank my racing Bluenose 24 that day. My two crew and I were for a brief moment three men in a tub when she went down. Now you know why my replacement raceboat is named *Rub-A-Dub*!

-Rob Legate, Madoc, Ontario

## Staying warm

I read your article on "Boatyard Ghosts" (November 2013) with the feeling I've been there and still am. I live in northern Michigan and I'm restoring a 1959 New Horizons 26. This article came back to mind yesterday when I was working on the inside of my boat and it was 20 degrees outside. The little heater keeps the inside of the boat a balmy 42 degrees. We ghosts keep thinking "Spring is just around the corner."

**FENDER** 

ADJUSTERS

-David Nelson, Roscommon, Mich.



MJ Richards thought our plain-vanilla big-logo long-sleeved white T-shirts could use a little pizazz. Here she is with her husband, Durkee, showing off her improved version.

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#### **Good old classifieds**

# Boats for Sale

Cape Dory 25 1977. Includes 1986 8-hp Nissan 2-stroke. Nice interior. Needs some exterior teak work. Sails old but useable. Stored in covered shed since 2010. Port St. Joe, FL \$3,000 OBO. Call marina at 850-227-3357. Randy Kirchhoff

randy\_kirchhoff@yahoo.com



#### Irwin 45

1976 ketch w/center cockpit. Great sailing boat! Narrow 10'6" beam, draws 4' w/CB up. New Yanmar 55-hp diesel and gearbox installed 5 yrs ago, low hrs. Solid hull and rigging. Commercial grade AP. Used as liveaboard and Bahamas cruising last 10 yrs. Cape Canaveral, FL, area. \$45,000 OBO. **Roger Mayfield 407-300-8786** 

r.e.mayfield@att.net



Pearson 28-1 1979. Very well maintained. Foresail cover 1 yr old. Dodger and mainsail cover, 2 yrs old. Sails in vg cond. Atomic 4 engine in great cond and runs strong. Harbor View Marina, Newport News, VA. \$9,200.

Bill Yoke 757-503-2154 yoke97@verizon.net



#### Tartan 34C

1970 classic Sparkman & Stephens design. Hull #136. Third owner. 3'11" draft with CB up. Perfect for exploring shallow bays. 2-year-old Moyer Marine FWC Atomic 4 w/16 hrs, professionaly maintained. Deck re-cored by previous owner. Just surveyed: exc cond. New cushions, stove, winches, running rigging, much more. Falmouth (Cape Cod), MA. \$19,900.

John Dow 617-291-1865 stigdow@comcast.net www.yachtworld.com/ boats/1970/Tartan-34-C-2559046/MA/ United-States



#### Grampian 34

Deck and hull assembled together by owner in '06. Lead keel 6,400 lb. Year-old Harken furling. 150 genoa, anchor w/100' chain on electric windlass. 30-hp Nissan OB. Bimini and complete enclosure 2 yrs. WS, Garmin GPS and depth, large marine inverter w/50' cord. Homebuilt, ocean-rated with many more options (too many to list). Tottenham, ON. \$19,500. Merv McDowell

905-936-2038 tullyho@gmail.com



#### Bristol 27

1966 classic Alberg design. WS, CDI furler. Sails are like new: 150 genoa and Doyle Stackpack FB main w/lazy-jacks. 10-hp Yamaha. Imron dark blue brushed paint job, teak toerails, and mahogany coamings get many compliments. White cabintop needs repainting. A sound, compact cruiser ready to take you anywhere. On Lake Ontario. Choose steel cradle or stands. \$9,500 OBO.

Dennis Cannan 585-342-9775 dcannan@aol.com



**Two-part Nesting Dinghy 9.5'** Marine plywood and epoxy, 1991. Used very little and stored indoors since 1991. Danny Greene design measures 58"x48"x22" nested and 114"x48"x18" bolted together. Bow section weighs 44 lb, stern section 60 lb, hull 105 lb when assembled with 3 thumb bolts. Rows like a dream and sails well downwind. East Texas, 100 miles north of Beaumont. \$1,695.

Hubert Foster 409-698-2935 bertandsallyfoster@gmail.com

Most of our classified ads appear on the GOOD OLD BOAT

website: www.goodoldboat.com/resources\_for\_sailors/sailing\_classifieds/



#### Islander 32

1965. Saphina has a beautiful glass hull, new wood toerail and coamings. Modified full keel, new main, Westerbeke diesel w/low hours. Remodeled interior, holding tank. Solid bluewater sailer. On Tennessee River at Tennessee-Tom Bigbee Waterway. Water access to Mobile Bay, Gulf of Mexico, and beyond. \$15,900.

Jeffrey Griffin 865-607-7987 griffinj7@yahoo.com www.captainschoiceof pickwick.com



#### C&C 27 MK II

1974 w/twin-axle trailer. Fresh water. Good cond. Rebuilt rudder post, new bottom paint '13. Main, 155 RF genoa, 2 spins plus extra sails. All lines lead to cockpit. GPS, W/S/D. Full list of equipment and photos available. Lake Geneva, WI. \$11,000. John Lavallee

815-378-5237 jlav0322@charter.net



Vindo 35 1976 Swedish sloop. Sound fiberglass hull. Beautiful teak decks and cabintop over fiberglass. Newer Yanmar diesel 3GM30 (about 11 yrs) w/210 hrs. Fuel system polished, new Racors ('13). RF jib, Bruce anchor. Engineer maintained. Needs some restoration. Annapolis, MD. \$24,000. William O'Neil 239-565-2345 thejobo@aol.com



**Capehart 47** 1969 classic motorsailer. Single Ford Lehman diesel in great running cond. Sound hull (layered wood/fiberglass), beautiful teak interior. Got boat in divorce. Must sell as is. Restoration required. Serious interest only please. On a mooring in San Diego. \$12,000 OBO.

> **Cheryl Bain** Cheryll666@gmail.com



Ranger 28 1977. Gilded Lily. Fully restored. Feature boat Sep/Oct '06 issue. Many upgrades. Beautiful, fast, comfortable sailer. Enhanced A4. New bottom paint. Dinghy, davits. On the hard in Atlanta. \$10,500. Walt Hodge 770-498-1678

walt@wingnwing.com http://www.wingnwing.com



Lazy Jack 32 1977 schooner designed by Ted Brewer, built by Ted Herman. Easy sailing. 6' bowsprit and 2' boomkin yield 40' of sail. Shallow draft ideal for cruising Gulf Coast, ICW, Bahamas, Mexico, Central

America, and Caribbean cruising islands, atolls, and shallow waters. Many added features: Low-hrs Yanmar 3YM30, marine SSB, Benmar AP, fridge/freezer, bow platform mounts 2 anchors, bow pulpit. 1200-watt inverter, and much more. Gulfport, MS. \$34,000. Jim Montgomery 228-669-3229 jimm10@cableone.net



Javelin 38

1961 Bill Tripp design. 7-yr-old 35-hp Betamarine diesel, 6 sails and full spinnaker, 150 genoa. Interior needs work. Sleeps 4 to 6 comfortably. WS, chart plotter, AC/ DC panel, marine radio. Beautiful cruiser. Large sail area and full hull. Fast and comfortable. Waukegan, IL. \$10,500.

Todd Trowbridge 502-657-9498 toddtrowbridge10@gmail.com



Bodega 30

1986 San Francisco-built bluewater veteran. Sailed to Alaska and through Panama Canal to Bahamas. Set up for singlehanding but ideal for a couple. Now needs a new captain to follow the dream. Solid full-keel construction with beautiful teak interior. Extensive sail and equipment inventory. Email for specs and additional photos. Serious inquiries only, please. Titusville, FL. \$16,000. Sharon Kelly

321-506-1062, 321-615-1375 sailsundancer@yahoo.com



Tartan 34C 1976. Freshwater boat w/Yanmar 22-hp diesel, 3'11" draft w/CB. Lewmar ST primary and halyard

winches new '10. Canvas includes dodger, Bimini, and connector, new '10, and mainsail cover, new '13. Hood FB main with Harken battcars, Harken RF w/150 genoa. Custom cockpit cushions. Wonderful teak interior w/Origo non-pressure alcohol/electric stove, fridge, H/C pressure-water. Cheboygan, MI. \$28,500. **Paul Wenner** 

513-777-2158 wennerpa@gmail.com http://76tartan.wordpress.com





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#### **Product launchings**



**Starboard Collection dinnerware** 

Entrepreneur and avid sailor Aimee Marti created the Starboard Collection line of tableware with thoughtfully designed features that overcome the challenges of entertaining on the water. The BPA-free dinnerware line is manufactured in the USA from recycled materials and includes bowls and plates, a serving bowl, a serving tray, and an appetizer set. The products are made of high-grade polypropylene and are top-rack dishwasher safe and shatterproof.

Non-slip bases help table settings stay put and deep rims reduce the likelihood of spills. Stackable bowls and plates fit snugly together to store efficiently in small spaces, and the vibrant color palette of Nantucket red, navy, canvas, and marine blue captures the maritime spirit of the collection. The prices are \$44 for a set of four bowls or four plates, \$36 for the serving bowl, and \$59 for the large serving tray. The products can be purchased online at www.starboardcollection.com.

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-Michael Facius

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For complete preparation and application instructions visit www.pettitpaint.com.



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# A breathtaking show for an audience of one

#### BY BUTCH EVANS

t's just past 2 a.m. The only sound is the velvet swish of water sliding along the hull. We're about 50 miles offshore with no sign of human habitation in sight - only Mother Ocean, glowing ethereal silver under the full moon, stars without number, my lonely soul, and the sailboat. The feeling of glorious isolation is existential.

I am perfect.

A large splash next to the boat is totally unexpected. It almost scares me out of my skin. Did something fall overboard? No, it's a dolphin jumping beside the boat — one, two, an entire pod. I wasn't expecting company tonight. Yet my isolation is unbroken, these creatures are alien - muscular slippery denizens of a deep I cannot know.

Even so, we share a living sea tonight for the water is alive with both the large and the small — the dolphins making their surprise appearance along with microscopic dinoflagellates burning yellow-green in the sea. The boat has been trailing a ribbon of faint green fire for hours, bioluminescent celebrations of the life force at a scale too small to see with the human eye. We have just sailed into an extremely bright patch, a glowing carpet on a black ocean. The pod of dolphins explodes the water with bioluminescence like it's the Fourth of July. The scene is beyond words. Dolphins leap from the water, glowing apparitions I can scarcely believe. As they swim, they disturb the tiny light-emitting algae in the water and trigger luciferin, the chemical of magical backyard twinkling that is the firefly's sexual fire. The algae-laden water coats the airborne dolphins with glowing sheets of neon fire. When they dive back into the water, living arrows of light, they trace paths - dolphin-shaped tunnels of bioluminescence. The glowing underwater tubes vanish as quickly as they appear, leaving me with an afterimage in my eyes and stunned with the intensity of raw beauty. It is a thousand sunsets at once.

My breath is gone, a bird flown from my chest.

Several young dolphins surf the bow wave of the sailboat. There are three on each side — a biological jet-fighter escort. The night is dark and the sea is black. My escorts leave glowing trails behind them, three lines of fire paralleling each side of the boat. It's as if Poseidon himself assigned these creatures to protect me.

The large dolphin swimming beside the cockpit trails a 2-foot-diameter tunnel of light in the dark sea as elegantly as a beautiful woman wears an evening gown. He rolls a bit and makes eye contact with me for a long second. A friendly squeak and he dives deep. Coming up beside the boat like a phosphorescent missile, he does a mid-air half turn and splashes back with an explosion of green light that's simply unbelievable. Then he comes back and makes eye contact again, as if to say, "What did you think of that?"

This dolphin is showing off.

It's just past 2 a.m. I'm on a sailboat miles from land, the only other person aboard is sound asleep belowdecks, and I'm communicating with a different species. This is what cruising is all about.

After a time measured on a clock of maybe 10 minutes, but measured by my soul as perhaps forever, the pod angles away into the night, continuing whatever mysterious voyage they must be on. I watch as the streaks of light move across the star-speckled surface of the Gulf of Mexico.

I remember to breathe.  $\varDelta$ 

Butch Evans got his start sailing with a 15-foot West Wight Potter on the windy lakes of Kansas. A few years later, he was astounded to find himself cruising an Island Packet 38 in the Bahamas. Currently boatless, he lives nestled up against the Smoky Mountains where he hikes, bikes, writes, enjoys unlimited hot water, and schemes for the next boat.



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